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THE DANISH FAIRY BOOK

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"AT LAST THEY CAME TO AN ENORMOUS CASTLE."

—*Page 15*

THE DANISH FAIRY BOOK

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TRANSLATED BY

FREDERICK H. MARTENS

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GEORGE W. HOOD

NEW YORK

FREDERICK A. STOKES COMPANY

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PREFACE

These fairy-tales of the Danish North are the simple and direct narratives of the fishermen, peasants, seamen, huntsmen, shepherds, smiths and humble toilers of the land of Hans Andersen, faithfully presented in the traditional forms handed down from father to son through the centuries. They have the beauty and the charm of all that the fancy of a primitive people invents to express its longing for color and radiance to illumine the dull grayness of everyday life. Out of a wealth of available material stories of the most diverse nature have been chosen; stories in which the hero awakens the instant sympathy of the reader, either by noble self-sacrifice, as in "Silverwhite and Lilwacker," or by brave persistence, as in "The Princess on the Glass Mountain," or by his sheer good luck, as in "Lasse, My Thrall." Again we have tales of the Trolls; folk-tales, like the thrilling "Charcoal Nils and the Troll Woman," or ghost-stories with a happy ending, such as "Torre Jeppe"; for the clouds of a reader of fairy-tales must have their silver linings. There are tales in which the Evil One deservedly plays the part of a loser, and many more,

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all differing one from the other in mood and in matter. These Danish fairy-tales, among their Scandinavian brethren, are especially well developed stories, on motives which appeal. For American readers, old or young, they have a definite value; for in national fairy-tales we find idealized the nobler qualities of national soul and character. And in the consciousness of American readers qualities such as loyalty, strength to endure and to overcome, faith, fidelity and sacrifice will wake a sympathetic overchord. Many a moral of enduring worth is more convincingly set forth in the naïve imagery of the fairy-tale than in philosophic treatise or sermon.

FREDERICK H. MARTENS.

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THE DANISH FAIRY BOOK

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THE DANISH FAIRY BOOK

I

KING DRAGON

ONCE upon a time there was a king who had a most beautiful queen. But they had no children, and this made the king feel very sad, and the queen even sadder. So one day as she was walking, lost in thought, she came to an out-of-the-way place. There she met an old woman who asked whether the queen would not tell her why she was so sad. The queen looked up and said: "Ah, what good would it do if I told you? There is nothing you could do to help me!"

"Perhaps I could," said the old woman, and once more begged the queen to confide in her. And so the queen told her she had no children, and that was the reason she was so sad. Why, that could be remedied, said the old woman; she might have children if she wished. In the evening, at sundown, she need only take a dish and lay it on the ground, bottom

up, in the northwest corner of the garden. In the morning, at sunrise, when she lifted it up, she would find two roses beneath it, a red rose and a white one. "And if you eat the red rose, you will have a boy; but if you eat the white rose, it will be a girl. But you must not eat both roses."

The queen went home, and did as the old woman had told her. In the morning at sunrise, she went to the garden and raised the dish from the ground, and there were the two roses, the red rose and the white one. But she could not decide which to eat. If she chose the red rose, it would be a boy, and he might have to go to war and be slain; and then she would be without a child again. So she thought she had best take the white rose; then it would be a girl, who would stay at home with her, and marry and become the queen of some other land. So she took the white rose and ate it. But it tasted so good that she took the red one and ate it as well. For she thought to herself: "If they are twins, why, they will count as one."

Now it chanced that the king was at war when the queen wrote him that they were to be blessed with a child. But when the child came it turned out to be a little dragon, who slipped under the bed in her room, and made that his nesting-place. After a time came a letter from the king, saying that he would soon be home. And when the king did come

home, and drove up to the castle in his coach, and the queen came out to meet him, the little dragon came out to greet him at the same time. He leaped up in the air beside the coach and cried: "Welcome home, father!"

"What!" said the king, "am I your father?"

"Yes, and if you do not want to be my father, I'll tear you to pieces, and smash the whole castle to bits!" So the king had to agree to be his father. Then they went into the castle, and the queen had to confess all that had passed between her and the old woman.

A few days later the whole council and all the nobles assembled to welcome the king back to his own country, and to congratulate him on his victory over the enemy. And the dragon came, too, and said: "Father, now I want to marry!"

"That's all very well," said the king, "but who do you think will marry you?"

"Well, if you do not find a bride for me, young or old, large or small, rich or poor, I'll tear you to pieces, and smash the whole castle to bits."

The king wrote to every kingdom to ask whether any one would marry his son. And a beautiful princess came, though she thought it strange that she was not allowed to see her intended until they stood in the room in which they were to be married. Only then did the dragon make his appearance and stand

beside her. The wedding-day came to an end, but no sooner were they alone, than the dragon devoured her.

Time went on, and the king's birthday came. Then, when they were all sitting around the table, the dragon came and said: "Father, I want to marry!"

The king replied: "Where is the woman who would be willing to marry you?"

"Well, if you don't find a bride for me, some kind of a bride, I will devour you and swallow the castle as well!"

Once more the king sent letters to all the other kingdoms, to ask whether any one wished to marry his son. And again a beautiful princess appeared, from a far country. She did not lay eyes on her intended until they stood in the room where they were to be married. Then the dragon appeared, and stood beside her. But when the wedding was over, and they were alone, the dragon did away with her.

Not long after came the queen's birthday. The dragon came in when all were sitting around the table and said: "Father, I want to marry!"

"Well, I cannot find you another bride," said the king. "The two powerful kings whose daughters I gave you, want to make war on me, so what am I to do!"

"Oh, just let them come! So long as you are on good terms with me, their coming need not worry you, though there were ten instead of two of them. But if you do not find me a bride, young or old, large or small, rich or poor, I will tear you to pieces and smash the whole castle to bits!" Thereupon the king had to yield; but he felt very unhappy.

Now there was an old man who was the king's shepherd. He had a little hut in the woods, and a daughter. The king went to him and said: "Listen, my dear fellow, won't you give your daughter to my son for a bride?"

"No, I could not do that; first of all, I have only this one child to take care of me in my old age and, besides, the prince, if he has no pity on such beautiful princesses, will surely have none to spare my daughter, which would be a sin!"

But the king insisted on having the girl, and the old man had to yield. The old shepherd went home and told his daughter, and she felt very unhappy; and went off with her sad thoughts to the woods. As she was walking, she met an old woman, in a red coat and a blue jacket, who was also going to the woods, to pick berries and crab-apples.

"Why are you so sad?" the woman asked her.

"I have good reason to be sad," said the girl, "but there is little use in my telling you, since there is nothing you can do to help me!"

"Perhaps there is," said the old woman, "so tell me what it is!"

"Well, I am to marry the king's son, but he is a dragon who has already done away with two princesses, and I am sure he will make way with me as well."

"If you listen to me, there is a way to help you," said the old woman. And the girl was glad to listen to her advice. "When you have been married, and are alone with the prince, you must wear ten shifts. If you do not own that many, you must borrow them. Then you must ask for a bucket of lye, and one of fresh milk, and a bundle of switches. These things must be brought to the room. When he comes in he will say: 'Lovely maiden, take off your shift!' Then you must say: 'King Dragon, take off your skin!' And so he will say to you, and you to him, until you have taken off nine shifts, and he has slipped out of nine skins. Then he will no longer have any skin left; but you will still have a shift. Then you must take him, for he will be no more than a skinless lump of flesh, dip the switches into the lye, and beat him until he well-nigh falls apart. Thereupon you must bathe him in the fresh milk, wrap him in the nine shifts, and put him to bed. And then you will fall asleep yourself, though but for a short time." The girl thanked the old woman for her good advice; but in spite of it she was afraid, for after all, it

was a daring game to play with such a sinister beast.

The wedding-day came, and two court ladies drove up in a large and magnificent coach, to adorn the maiden with her bridal finery. She was brought to the castle and to the room; the dragon came and stood beside her, and they were married.

Evening came, and they were left alone. Then the bride called for a bucket of lye, and one of sweet milk, and the switches. The courtiers made fun of her, and spoke of peasant superstitions; but the king said that she was to have what she wanted. And it was given her. Before she was left alone with her husband she put on the nine shifts she had obtained over the one she wore. Then the dragon said: "Lovely maiden, take off your shift!" And she replied: "King Dragon, take off your skin!" And thus it went, until she had taken off nine shifts and he nine skins. Then she regained her courage, for the dragon lay on the floor and could scarcely move. So she took the switches, dipped them in the lye, and beat him as long and as hard as she could, until the switches were worn out. Then she dipped him in the fresh milk, wrapped him in the nine shifts, and put him to bed. Then she at once fell asleep herself, for it was late. When she awoke she saw a handsome prince standing before her.

When morning came, none dared look through the door of the room, for all thought she had met with the fate of her two predecessors. But the king determined to have a peep, and as soon as he opened the door he cried out: "Come on in! Everything is as it should be!" And he went himself, full of joy, and brought in the queen and the whole court. There stood the newly-wedded pair, and received the congratulations showered upon them. Now the wedding was celebrated all over again with the utmost splendor and happiness, and the king and queen grew very fond of their daughter-in-law, and could not do enough to show her how much they thought of her, who had delivered their dragon.

Now war broke out again, and the old king and King Dragon were both with the army when the young queen was blessed with two handsome boys. At that time there was a knight at court called the Red Knight. He was sent to King Dragon with a letter, to tell him that he was the father of two fine boys. The Red Knight rode a little way, then opened the letter, took it out, and wrote instead that there were two young pups at the castle. This letter the king received, and it made him very sad, since he found it strange that his children should be pups; he would rather have expected a dragon or something of that sort. He wrote back that they were to allow the creatures to live until his return,

if they showed any signs of life at all. This letter the Red Knight was to take back with him. But when he had ridden a while, he opened this letter as he had done the first, and wrote another one, saying that they were to burn up the queen, together with the children.

Now this letter saddened the old queen greatly, for she was very fond of her young daughter-in-law. Shortly after there came a letter from the king announcing his return home. Then they were frightened, and did not know what to do; for the old queen could not make up her mind to have them burned at the stake. She had the children handed over to a nurse, bidding her take care of them, since she thought that, after all, when the king reached home he might change his mind for the better. And she gave the young queen food and some money, and told her to hide away in the woods.

So the young queen went into the woods, and wandered about for two whole days, and was in great straits. Then she saw a lofty mountain, and climbed to the top without stopping by the way. On the top of the mountain were three benches, and she seated herself on the one in the middle, and longed for her children, whom she missed at her breast. Then, as she sat there, came two great birds, a swan and a crane, who placed themselves beside her, and begged that she would nourish them, in place of her

children, who had been taken away. And when, out of the kindness of her heart, she had done so, they were suddenly changed to two of the handsomest princes one could imagine, and the mountain turned into the most splendid royal castle one might hope to see, with courtiers and well-filled stables, and gold and silver, and everything such a castle should have. The two princes had been enchanted, and could never have been released from their enchantment, had they not met a bereaved queen, who in her pity had nourished them as she would her own lost little ones. So the queen stayed at the castle with King Stork and King Crane who, now that they had been delivered, wanted to marry her.

Meanwhile King Dragon came home, and asked for his queen.

"Well," said the old queen, "that is about all there is lacking—that you should ask for her! You are a fine fellow! You never even remembered that she rescued you from the profoundest wretchedness! You could even write us to burn her and the children at the stake! You ought to be ashamed of yourself!"

"No," said King Dragon, "you wrote me that instead of two fine sons she had given me two young pups; and I wrote back to let the creatures live until I reached home!"

Then there was a great deal of talk, and at last

they found out that the Red Knight had been the traitor. So they seized him, and he had to confess. And when he had confessed he was put in a barrel spiked with nails, to which four horses were harnessed, and they galloped off with him over hill and dale.

The king was filled with sorrow because of his wife and children, especially when he found out that they had been two fine boys. But the old queen said to him: "Do not worry! The children are well taken care of, for I have handed them over to a nurse; but as to your wife, I do not know what has become of her. I gave her some food and some money, and told her to hide in the woods, and since then I have had no news of her."

Then the king commanded that the children be brought back to the castle, and he took food and some money, and went into the woods to look for his wife. He wandered about looking for her three days; but could find no trace of her. When he met people in the woods, he asked them whether they had seen a strange maiden go into the forest; but no one had seen her. At length he came to the castle in the woods, and decided to enter and see the royalties who lived in it. So in he went. And the moment he went in, he saw his young queen, and she saw him; but she was afraid that he had come to burn her up, and ran away. Then the two princes

came along, and all began to talk, and became good friends. They invited King Dragon to stay to dinner. He said that they had a beautiful maiden in their castle, and where did she come from? They replied she was very kind indeed, and that she had released them both from their enchantment. Then King Dragon wanted to know from what sort of enchantment she had released them, and they told him the whole story. He said that he liked her, too, and asked whether they could not come to some agreement as to which of them was to marry her. How would it be to put too much salt in the dinner; then, whichever one of them she should ask to drink with her, should have her. The two princes were well content with this proposal, as in this way they could decide at once which of them was to obtain her hand; for they did not believe that she would ask the stranger to drink with her.

So they went to dinner, and before long she said: "It seems to me that the dinner is very salty.

"King Swan sits close to me,
King Crane is kind to me,
King Dragon, drink with me!"

King Dragon at once took up the silver tankard and drank to her health, and the others drank to their own health; and then they had to drink her health and his as well, though they were not content. But

King Dragon told them how she had released him from enchantment before releasing them, so that he really had the first claim to her. The two princes said that he ought to have told them so straight off, as then they would have surrendered the queen to him. But King Dragon replied that he could not have been altogether sure of that.

Then King Dragon returned home with his queen, and the children also had been brought home in the meantime. King Swan kept the palace in the woods, and married a princess from another kingdom. And King Crane went into another land, and married there. So each of them got something. King Dragon and his queen were held in high esteem all their life long. They were very happy and had many children, and the last time I visited them they gave me a tin sandwich in a sieve.

NOTE

"King Dragon" (Grundtvig, *Gamle Danske Minder i Folkemunde*, Copenhagen, 1855, Bk. I, No. 216, p. 172), a fairy-tale from Vendsyssel, is one of the most famous of Danish traditional tales, and introduces the favorite motive of deliverance from enchantment in animal form in a rich and individual development. (Comp. Azel Olrik, *Kong Lindorn, Danske Studier*, 1905, I.)

II

THE DEER PRINCE

THERE was once a widower and a widow, who married each other. Now each of them had a daughter; but the daughter of the widower was lovely to look upon, while the daughter of the widow was very homely. And the wife was jealous of her husband's daughter because she was so much fairer than her own. Early and late her thoughts turned on how she might harm her, and she treated her very harshly.

Now her husband was away from home nearly every day, from morning till evening, and since he was never at home he did not notice how his daughter was treated.

One evening, after the door was locked and all had gone to bed, there was a knock at the door. The woman told her daughter to go and open the door, and see who was outside. This the daughter had no mind to do, but the woman insisted, and then the husband's daughter offered to go to the door; but this did not suit the woman at all, and she insisted that *her* daughter go. So the girl went and drew the bolt, and there at the door stood a great antlered

deer, or something of the sort. She picked up a broomstick and was about to beat the animal, but it at once disappeared. Then she went in again and told her mother what it had been. At night of the following day, after the door had been bolted, there was another knock, and this time the woman's daughter did not dare to go down and draw the bolt, so the husband's daughter had to do it. When she had unbolted the door she saw the deer standing outside, and she said to him: "Where do you come from, you poor fellow?"

"Little girl, mount on my back!"

No, that she would not do, said the girl, for it would be a shame, since the poor fellow had enough to do to carry himself. Well, she could not go along with him in any other way, replied the deer. So she climbed upon his back, since she did not want to stay at home, and he ran off with her. They came to a meadow, and the deer said to her: "How would it be for us to enjoy this pretty spot together some time?" But the girl could not imagine how that could possibly come to pass or what it would be like. Then they reached a wood, and here, too, the deer said: "How would it be for us to take a pleasant walk together in this beautiful wood some time?" But she could not imagine such a thing.

At last they came to an enormous castle. The deer led her into it, and told her that she was to live

there all alone; but that her every wish would be granted, and she could make her own plans for passing the time in whatever way she preferred. He would return to visit her before long. Yet there was one place in the castle which she must avoid: a place where there were three doors, one of wood, one of copper and one of iron. Under no consideration was she to unlock them—but he thought to himself, that at the very first chance she would be quite certain to do what he had forbidden.

So she killed time all that day, quite alone as she was, until nightfall, and the following morning she began to look around. And she felt a great desire to open the iron door, and could not resist it and opened it. There stood two men who were stirring a kettle of tar with bare hands and arms. She asked them why they were stirring with bare hands and arms, and they replied that they had no choice, but must do so until a Christian soul gave them something else with which to stir their tar. So the girl took a hatchet, chopped out a couple of flat wooden paddles, and gave them to the men to stir with.

The day passed, and night came, and the following morning she heard a great noise in the courtyard of the castle. Men were running about everywhere, grooms feeding the horses, and servants polishing the silver, all of them very busy, and they filled the

entire courtyard And now she felt a desire to open the second door, and so she opened it. There stood two girls who were raking a glowing fire with their bare hands. She asked them why they raked the fire with their bare hands. The girls replied that they had no choice, until some Christian soul gave them something with which they could rake. Then the maiden gave them a pole, and the girls thanked her most gratefully.

On the following morning the castle was full of girls, sweeping and washing and polishing everything. So that day passed; but she could not help herself, she had to open the remaining door, the wooden one. And there lay the deer on a pile of straw, and she asked him why he lay there. He said he had to lie there until some Christian soul took pity on him, and wiped the mud from his back. She took a handful of straw and wiped off the mud. And as she was doing it, he was changed into as handsome a prince as one would wish to see. He explained to her that he and the whole castle had been enchanted; but that now all was well and they would celebrate their wedding. And a fine wedding it was, lasting several days.

Now when some time had passed, the prince asked his wife whether she would not like to invite her step-mother and step-sister to visit her. She said she would like to do so very much. So the prince

told her, that when they came, he himself would not be with them at first, but that when she offered them wine, she was to spill a drop on her shoe. Then he would appear and dry it for her. And she must take care not to give her step-mother any one thing or three different things, but only a quantity of something, such as corn.

So when the step-mother and step-sister arrived, the princess—for of course she was a princess now—was very kind to them. And when she poured the wine for them, she let fall a drop on her golden shoe, and that very moment the prince appeared and dried the spot with his handkerchief; and if the others had not already had eyes and mouth wide open, you may be sure they had when they saw the prince come in.

Then they went out into the garden, and the step-mother insisted on having an apple, though the princess would give her none. The step-mother, however, kept on insisting that she must have some apples, even though she had no more than three. But no, the princess merely said that when the apples were ripe her step-mother could have any number of them. Thereupon the step-mother grew furiously angry, and as she went off with her daughter, she was filled with envy to think that such good fortune had not come the latter's way. And she could not resist telling her it was her own fault.

The daughter gave a saucy answer, and as usually happens, one word leading to another, they were soon quarreling violently, and in the end both of them burst into pebbles. And that is the reason that there are so many pebbles underfoot.

NOTE

In "The Deer Prince" (Grundtvig, III, No. 37, p. 62), a fairy-tale from East Jutland, a maiden is moved by pity to question various enchanted creatures, and give them tools they can make use of, in spite of being forbidden to do so, a detail which in many fairy-tales leads to the deliverance of the hero. The bursting or breaking up into pebbles of the wicked mother and sister at the close, out of sheer envy, is a mode of destruction especially attributed in Northern legend to supernatural beings. In the "Edda," Nanna bursts asunder from grief, when she is informed of Baldur's death.

III

THE PRINCESS ON THE ISLAND

THERE once reigned a king in England, who had an only son. It chanced that on a time a picture of the princess of Denmark came into the young prince's hands, and from that moment on he had no peace: she and none other was the woman he wished to marry.

So he went to his father and told him that he loved the princess of Denmark above everything, and wished to marry her. His father was entirely satisfied. "If England and Denmark stand together, there is no power on earth that can stand against them," he said. He at once wrote a letter to the Danish king and asked his daughter's hand for his son, who would succeed him as king of England. But the Danish king wrote back that his daughter was still a child, and that at all events, she should never be queen of England. This made the English king angry, and he wrote again, and said that the Danish princess must become his son's bride, though blood be spilt as a consequence. Thereupon the Danish king answered that it should never happen so long as there was a drop of blood left in a Dane.

So war broke out. The English prince came to Denmark with a great army and besieged the capital. But the Danish king sent his daughter away to an island. He gave her seven maidens and a little dog to keep her company, together with supplies for seven years. Then he had the castle on the island walled up, so that no one could get in or out.

When seven years had passed, the English prince had captured the city and slain the king. He established himself in the castle, visited all the rooms, and also came to the princess's room. And there stood an ivory spinning-wheel whose spokes were of red gold. A fabric beautifully woven with birds, fishes and all sorts of beasts hung in the spindle; but it was unfinished. After the prince had the princess searched for and sought after for a long time, he bade proclaim throughout the country that she who could complete the fabric that hung from the spindle should be his queen. For he thought that the Danish princess would put in an appearance, once she knew she had nothing to fear from him.

Now there was a duke in the Danish land, whose daughter bore a close resemblance to the vanished princess, and who was a very skillful spinner. He told her to go to the castle and make the attempt; but the fabric had been woven with an art beyond

her power to equal, and all that she wove turned out to be wrong.

In the meantime the princess, with her seven maids and the little dog, had been living in the walled-up castle on the island. They had eaten up their seven years' store of provisions, and began to suffer from hunger, so they tried to break through the wall; but it was slow work, and they were nearly dead of starvation, so little food was there left. Then, one after another, the seven maids who were with the princess leaped from the castle wall into the sea, that their mistress, whom they loved, might not perish of hunger. And with them went the little dog.

Meanwhile the princess killed mice in the castle, skinned them, hung up the skins and ate the flesh, and, just as the last of them was gone, she managed to break through the wall. Not far from the strand she saw a ship, waved to it and was taken on board. She was put ashore near her father's castle. Here she drew off her beautiful clothes, and wrapping herself in rags, went to the kitchen and asked whether they could use a scrub-woman. She made a good impression on the duke's daughter, and was engaged So now the Danish princess stood in the kitchen of her father's castle and did the most menial work. On Saturday the scrub-woman took her pail of water into the weaving-room. As she

stood there, admiring the artfully woven fabric in the spindle, the duke's daughter said to her that she had never in all her life woven so difficult a pattern. But the scrub-girl answered she felt confident she could complete the work.

"Well, if you can do that, I will give you a hundred dollars and make you chamber-maid," said the duke's daughter.

The princess pulled out all the strands which the other girl had woven incorrectly, and then began to spin rapidly. The prince could hear the spinning-wheel humming till it echoed through the whole castle, and in the course of a few days he was informed that the fabric was completed. Then he came and examined it. He could find no fault with it whatever, and now had to keep his word and marry the duke's daughter, though he had his serious doubts as to whether she really was the Danish princess.

The Danish princess had owned a horse named Blanca. It had been left to its own devices during the seven years the war had lasted, and had become so vicious that two men had to lead it to water with strong poles. The wedding was to take place on a Sunday, and the prince had given orders that his bride was to ride to the church on Blanca; for well he knew that none but the Danish princess would dare to ride Blanca. The duke's daughter did not

dare to do so. She told the real princess, who had become a scrub-girl, to take off her wretched clothes, and put on her own bridal gown, and to ride to church with the prince in her stead. As a reward she would give her another hundred dollars.

The prince came and called for the princess, and took her with him. First they came to a bridge that creaked and groaned. Then the princess said:

"Bridge, break not beneath the bride!
You were the king, my father's pride!"

And the bridge became quiet.

"What did you say, heart of mine?" asked the prince.

"Nothing, my lord!" answered the princess.

Then they came to a gate, and before it lay a dog on a chain. The dog barked and growled. Then the princess said:

"Dog, bark no more, but stand aside!
You were the king, my father's pride!"

The dog stopped barking.

"What did you say, heart of mine?" asked the prince.

"Nothing, my lord!" answered the princess.

They went on and came to a dike. Here the princess said:

"Below the dike the fish are gay,
And merrily in the water play.
Could red gold have bought the food they craved,
My seven maids I mourn had been saved!"

"What did you say, little heart of my heart?" asked the prince. "Nothing, my lord!" replied the princess. And they rode on.

Far off in the distance the princess could see the island where she had dwelt for seven years. Then she said:

"Gray mouse-skins hanging whence I fled,
I drew you off with fear and dread.
Had I not starved, I'd not have fed
On mice, instead of goodly bread!"

"What did you say, little heart of my heart?" asked the prince.

"Nothing, my lord!" replied the princess.

At last they came to Blanca. Blanca kicked out, reared and was quite unmanageable. At last the princess said:

"Blanca, Blanca, kneel for me,
No other maid has ridden thee,
Save her you see!"

No sooner had the horse heard the voice of the princess than it knelt for her, and she could mount it.

"What did you say, heart of my heart?" asked the prince.

"Nothing, my lord!" answered the princess. But the prince was happy, for now he knew that none other than the Danish princess was riding beside him. And when they reached the church the prince gave her his golden gloves, and made her vow that she, and she alone would give the gloves back to him should he ask for them.

Then they were betrothed, and rode back from the church to the castle. Here they were to change their clothes; and the princess stepped into the weaving-room while the duke's daughter stepped out in her stead. Now all thought there would be a great feast with many guests; but the prince declared that he did not feel just in the humor for a feast that day, and that the guests were to return on the morrow, when the wedding would be celebrated.

When evening came the prince and the duke's daughter went into the bridal chamber. Then the prince begged her to repeat to him what she had said on the bridge. The duke's daughter said that it was strange, she had forgotten everything that day; but she had a chamber-maid to whom she had confided all that she had said during the day, and she would be sure to know. She would ask her.

So the bride ran out to the princess, and said to her: "Listen, you little silly, what did you say on

the bridge?" The princess repeated her words, and the duke's daughter returned to the prince and said:

"Bridge, break not beneath the bride!
You were the king, my father's pride!"

"Yes, that's what it was," said the prince, and she thought that the questioning was over. But the prince now asked her what was it she said to the dog. She told him that her heart was so taken up with love for him that she simply could not remember anything; but she would go at once to her chamber-maid and ask her. So she ran to the princess, and told her that her head would turn with all the speeches she was supposed to have made underway. "Now what was it that you said to the dog?" And the princess told her, and she went back to the prince and repeated:

"Dog, bark no more, but stand aside!
You were the king, my father's pride."

"Yes, that's what it was," said the prince, "that is a wonderful chamber-maid you have."

The duke's daughter now thought that he would stop. But the prince also wanted to know what she had said at the dike. So she had to ask the princess again, and came back and told him:

"Below the dike the fish are gay,
And merrily in the water play.
Could red gold have bought the food they craved,
My seven maids I mourn had been saved!"

The prince said that her chamber-maid must have a good memory; but he still wanted to know what she had said when she looked at the island out in the sea. So once more she was obliged to go to the princess, very much annoyed at all the running to and fro she had to do. And she asked her: "What was it you said, you chatterbox, when you saw the island out at sea?" The princess did not like the way she addressed her; but kept her temper, and quietly repeated the words. And when the duke's daughter came back to the prince she had once more remembered what she had said:

"Gray mouse-skins hanging whence I fled,
I drew you off with fear and dread.
Had I not starved, I'd not have fed
On mice, instead of goodly bread."

"Yes, that's what it was," said the prince; and now she thought that he would at last content himself. But the prince still wanted to know what she said to Blanca. Why, that had also completely slipped her memory; but the chamber-maid would be sure to recall it, since she had told it all to her when she came out of church.

Again she ran to the princess, and if she had not been angry before she was decidedly angry now: what did she mean by all the speeches she had been reciting to the prince while they were underway? One might imagine that she, the duke's daughter, had nothing else to do but run back and forth between them. "Tell me at once, what sort of speech did you make to him when you were to ride Blanca?" The princess still kept her temper, and told her the truth. And when the duke's daughter had the answer she went to the prince and repeated it to him:

"Blanca, Blanca, kneel for me,
No other maid has ridden thee,
Save her you see!"

"Yes, that's what it was," said the prince. "Your chamber-maid has memory enough for two." So now the duke's daughter thought he would let her be. But no, the prince now insisted that she return to him the golden gloves that he had asked her to take charge of for him. She said that they were in her room, and that she would get them at once. When she came to the princess this time she was far more polite than before, and asked her for the gloves. But the princess said: no, she could not give them to her, since she had sworn an oath that she herself, and none other, would give back the

gloves to the prince. The duke's daughter wrung her hands, and did not know what to do. Then the princess had an idea: they both would enter the bridal chamber, put out the lights, and give the prince his gloves; then she would slip from the room, and the duke's daughter would stay with the prince, and he would never notice the deception.

They went back together to the bridal chamber. The princess entered, put out the lights, and went up to the prince with the gloves. And then she wanted to slip from the room; but the prince held her arm, and said she would have to stay with him, and that whoever else might be in the room was to go out. In the morning the duke's daughter was sent back to her father; but in the castle they celebrated the wedding of the English prince with the Danish princess.

NOTE

"The Princess on the Island" (Grundtvig, II, No. 308, p. 157). In this fairy-tale from Vendsyssel, there sounds an echo, perhaps, of the century-long enmity between the Danes and the English. The false bride frequently appears in fairy-tales, and is unmasked in a variety of ways. This tale is particularly attractive because of the ancient verse-inserts. There is an interesting variant to be found in Denmark and Sweden, in which the princess is imprisoned in a cave in the ground, instead of an island. This is a distinctly Northern feature, which does not appear south of Ditmarsh (W. dist. of Holstein); and antiquarian research has established its connection with the enormous Danish grave-mounds of the Stone Age.

IV

THE LITTLE WILD DUCK

THERE was once a woman who had three children; two of them were step-children and the other was her own child. Then the son went away to seek service, and came to the king's court, where he became a prime favorite. The daughters, however, remained at home with the mother. She treated her step-daughter as unkindly as ever she could, and her main ambition was to take her life. Yet the girl was always good and well-behaved, a dear little thing.

One day the step-mother took her and placed her on the edge of the well, and told her to wind yarn, and as she sat there, working away, the step-mother came from behind and pushed her, so that she fell head over heels into the well. But there was not enough water in the bottom to drown her, and she kept looking around the sides of the well until she found an old, rusty door. She passed through it and on the other side found some little people, who were very busy, for it was baking day, and they had a hard time of it because they had a little child, ill and not at all strong, and could not attend to it

properly because they had so much to do. So they asked the girl whether she would not mind the child for them a bit; since it was a shame that it should have to cry so. Surely, if they wished her to, said the girl. Well, if she would, said they, it would suit them very well.

So she took care of the child the whole day long, played with it, and lulled it to sleep, and the child was glad to be with her. In the evening the people said that now she could wish three wishes, because she had been so good to the little one. But she only wished to get out of the well, that was all the wish she had. So the women said since she would not wish for herself, they would wish for her, and she should be helped out of the well besides. So the first wish was, that whenever she took off her hood, and let down her hair, it would grow bright round about her, no matter how dark it might be. The next wish was, that whenever she opened her mouth and blew, a ring of gold would be blown out; and the third was, that if ever she were in danger of drowning, she should not sink, but float on the water in the shape of a little wild duck. When they had spoken her wishes, the people saw to it that she got out of the well, and so she came back to her stepmother.

"What! You're back again?" called out the latter. The girl blew in the air, and a number of beau-

tiful golden rings fell to the floor, and lay there shining brightly. When the step-mother saw this she came running, and tried to pick them up; but the girl quickly picked them up herself, and put them in her pocket. In the evening, when it grew dark, she threw back her hood and let down her hair, and the room grew bright as day. Then her step-mother became more curious, and questioned the girl as to what she had done for the people down in the well, in return for such handsome gifts.

"I'll tell you what I did," said she. "They were baking down below there, and they had a little child, and I took care of it for them, and in return they wished three good wishes for me."

"Then my own daughter must go down to-morrow, and have three wishes granted her, too," said the woman. So the next morning she sent her daughter to the well; and while she was sitting on its edge and spinning, her mother ran up and pushed her in.

At the bottom of the well the girl looked around until she found the rusty door, and came in to the people who lived behind it. This day they were slaughtering and had their hands full. When she heard the child crying, she offered to mind it for them for a while, like her sister. But it was very restless, and she was unkind and angry with it, so that the child grew peevish and cried the whole time; and the more it cried, the more impatient the girl

became, and slapped and cuffed it. In the evening she was also allowed to make three wishes, and when she only asked to be let out of the well, since she had had all she wanted of the life below, they said: "You shall surely get out again." And then they earnestly wished for her that whenever she took off her hood and let down her hair, all would grow dark about her, though it were bright daylight; and furthermore, that a fox-tail should grow out of her head, and the oftener it were cut off, the longer it should grow. And then the woman said: "And the third wish is, that whenever you purse your mouth and blow, a gray toad fall to the ground." The wishes had now been wished, and the people agreed that she must be helped out of the well, and so she came back to her mother.

"But what sort of a tail is that hanging from your head?" asked her mother. "We'll have to cut it off." She took her scissors and cut off the tail—it grew longer. Then she cut it again, but this time it grew so long it dragged along the ground after her, and seeing there was no help for it, she had to keep it. After that people called her "Foxtail."

The other little girl's brother served the king, and stood high in his favor. Every day, after dinner, he begged permission to go to the woods. This aroused the king's curiosity, and one day he followed him, in order to find out why he went to the

woods every day. And he found that the young fellow had carved a beautiful picture on a tree, a picture of his sister. So the king asked him what sort of a likeness it was, and whether it were an idol to which he prayed? No, said he, it was his little sister at home, and she had a hard time of it because her step-mother treated her so unkindly. Therefore he went out into the woods every day, and prayed the good God might help her, and that life might be made easier for her. At the same time he told the king how beautiful she was, and at last the king said, that if she were so beautiful, her brother had better travel home and fetch her to court, for he might marry her.

So the brother started out, and on the road he bought handsome clothes for his sister, for well he knew that she had but inferior things to wear. And he had luck with his buying, for the new things fitted her to perfection, and she looked beautiful in them. And he delivered the message that she was to come to court in the king's service. Yes, indeed, said the step-mother, and she and Foxtail would go along with them. He could not very well forbid them to go, so all four of them started on their journey.

When they were out at sea—for they had to take ship to reach the royal castle—it stormed so that the brother came on deck, and said to his sister: "Take good care of yourself!" For the waves fell

inboard, and swept the deck in a terrifying manner. But she could not hear what her brother said, for her step-mother had boxed her ears so severely that she was hard of hearing. So she asked her step-mother: "What did my brother say?"

"He said you were to take off your dress, and give it to my daughter to put on." Whatever her brother told her to do the girl did gladly. So she took off her dress, and exchanged it for that which Foxtail had been wearing. Not long after her brother once more cried: "Sister, take good care of yourself!"

"What did my brother say then?" she asked.

"He says that you are to take the jewels from your head, and give them to my daughter." Well, she was glad to do whatever her brother told her, she said, and took the jewels from her own head and put them on that of Foxtail. But they did not show to such advantage there because of the tail on her head. Then her brother called out once more to her: "Little sister, do take good care of yourself!"

"What did my brother say?"

"He said that you were to lay your head in my lap, so that I might comb your hair," said the mother, and the girl did so, since whatever her brother told her to do she was glad to do. That very moment, however, her step-mother threw her into the sea.

Yet she did not drown, but turned into a little wild duck, and swam after the ship.

When they landed, the king came down from the castle to meet them, and asked whether this was his sister. For now, of course, the brother had only his step-sister with him. And the king grew angry when he saw her, and said the brother should be cast into the serpents' den, and there the serpents should devour him. That was the punishment in those days for a person who had done some great wrong. So they cast him into the serpents' den as the king had ordered.

Now at nightfall there came a little wild duck, and swam up the drain-pipe so that she reached the king's kitchen, and there she flung off all her feathers, and warmed her poor, naked little body by the fire. A little dog was sitting in the kitchen, and the duck went up to him and said:

"Rowzer, Towzer, under the bench!
Is the king in his castle asleep?
Is the old rogue asleep behind the stove?
Is my brother asleep in the serpents' den?
Is my sister Foxtail asleep, and her mother as well?"

Then she threw a rod to the dog, which he was to give her brother to ward off the serpents, and finally she blew out a golden ring for the kitchen-maid,

because she had allowed her to warm herself by the fire.

Now as a matter of fact, an old rogue had been lying behind the stove; but he had been awake, not asleep, all the time, and listening. At last, when the duck had drawn on all her feathers again, she said: "I will come twice more, and if I am not delivered then, I will have to pass the rest of my life on the seashore."

The rascally old servant heard that, too; but he did not venture to tell the king, because if it did not turn out to be true, he was afraid he would also be cast into the serpents' den.

On the following evening the duck again appeared, swimming up the drain-pipe to the kitchen as before. When she came into the kitchen she shook off her feathers, and said to the dog:

"Rowzer, Towzer, under the bench!
Is the king in his castle asleep?
Is the old rogue asleep behind the stove?
Is my brother asleep in the serpents' den?
Is my sister Foxtail asleep, and her mother as well?"

And at the same time she threw him a rod to give to her brother, so that he might ward off the serpents, and then she blew out a golden ring for the kitchen maid to reward her for letting her warm herself. At last she said: "Now I shall come once

more, and if I am not released then, I will have to pass the rest of my life on the seashore."

The old rogue was lying behind the stove as before, and heard everything, and the next day he told the king all that had happened, and all that he had heard. So the king decided to lie behind the stove himself and listen, and if what he heard did not agree with what his servant had said, the latter would have to go into the serpents' den.

And at nightfall the little wild duck came swimming in through the head of the drain-pipe, as usual, and said to the dog:

"Rowzer, Towzer, under the bench!
Is the king in his castle asleep?
Is the old rogue asleep behind the stove?
Is my brother asleep in the serpents' den?
Is my sister Foxtail asleep and her mother as well?"

Then she threw a rod to the dog to give her brother so that he might ward off the serpents, and blew out a golden ring for the kitchen-maid, because she let her warm herself. "Now I will never come back again, and will have to spend the rest of my life on the seashore," she said, and waddled along the floor as ducks do. But she had shaken off her feathers, as usual, when she came; and these the king had taken secretly, while she was going up and down, and now she needed her feathers and could not find them at all. So she began to complain bitterly: that

now she did not even have her feathers, and she would be sure to freeze, since she could no longer come and warm herself in the kitchen. Yet the moment came when she had to go, and she was about to swim out through the drain-pipe as usual, when the king seized her, and though she tried to escape, he held her firmly. Then she turned into a cheese, and when the king laid the cheese into the ashes of the hearth, the cheese turned into an eel. Then the king took a knife to cut off its head, when suddenly it was changed into the loveliest maiden he had ever seen. First of all they sent to release her brother from the serpents' den, where the serpents had done him no harm, because he had been innocent when cast into their lair. Then Foxtail and her mother were seized, and had to admit all they had done against the little wild duck, her brother and the king. And they were punished and came to an evil end.

But the king married the lovely maiden who had been the little wild duck, and her brother is in the king's service to this very day.

NOTE

"The Little Wild Duck" (Kristensen, *Jyske Folkeminder*, Bk. V, No. 16, p. 118) comes from Jutland. It introduces the ancient motive of the return, in animal form, of those who have been treacherously murdered. The laying off of the plumage is probably a half-forgotten feature of other fairy-tales, in which the bird doffs his feathers and has to keep his human shape, if some one robs him of them. (Comp. "Norwegian Fairy Tales," No. 45.)

V

THE LITTLE GIRL AND THE SERPENT

THERE was once a little girl who had to take her father's dinner out to him in the fields, where he was working. And when she had brought him his dinner he told her to go fetch his jacket, which he had laid under a tree. And the little girl went to fetch it. But when she came to the tree, there was a monstrous big serpent lying on the jacket, so she took a stick and made as though to drive him off; but the serpent would not leave the jacket. Then the girl begged the serpent please to go away, so that she might take the jacket to her father.

"Yes," said the serpent, "if you will come back and seat yourself on my back, you may take away the jacket."

The girl agreed, the serpent crawled off the jacket, and the girl brought it to her father. Then she came straight back again, and seated herself on the serpent's back; but no sooner had she done so than the serpent crawled to the woods, and kept crawling further and further into them.

After they had gone a long way, the serpent said:

"Little girl, stand up on my back and tell me if you see anything?"

The girl stood up and said: "I see something shining like bright silver!"

"Yes, that is my mother's castle," said the serpent. "We still have a long way to go."

Then the serpent crawled through the woods for another long stretch, and once more said: "Little girl, stand up on my back and tell me if you see anything?"

"Yes," said the girl, "I see something shining like pure gold!"

"Well, that is my father's castle," said the serpent. "We still have a long way to go."

So the serpent crawled on again for a long stretch, and said for the third time: "Little girl, stand up on my back and tell me if you see anything?"

"Yes," said the girl, "I see something shining like diamonds!"

"Well, we will be there in a moment," said the serpent. And he crawled on until he came to a handsome castle, and there he laid himself before the door, and said to the girl: "Stand on my back and ring the bell! And when the doorkeeper comes, tell him you want to take service in the castle; then he will receive you kindly."

The girl did as the serpent told her, and when the doorkeeper came and asked her what she wanted,

she told him that she wished to take service in the castle. He asked her what she could do, and she said she could sweep the floor, and carry water and help in the kitchen. Then she had better come right along, said he, for they could make good use of her. So he led her into the castle, and showed her to her bedroom, and then she went down to the kitchen and helped with all the work, and everybody took a liking to her because she was so active.

In the evening, when she came to her little room, she heard some one knock at the door, and asked who it might be. "Oh, just myself," replied the serpent. "It is so cold out here that I am freezing. May I come in and lie down in your room?" The girl felt sorry for the serpent, who had to lie outside and freeze, and she let him in. But no sooner was he in the room than he tried to kiss her. She held her apron before her face, but the serpent kissed her for all that, and suddenly he was changed into as handsome a prince as one might wish to see. He thanked her for releasing him from his enchantment, and told her that he was a king's son, and that they were in his own castle. The prince and the maiden now celebrated their wedding with great pomp, then went to see his father and his mother, and after that visited the parents of the little girl, whom they brought back to the castle with them, where they all lived in peace and happiness.

NOTE

"The Little Girl and the Serpent" (Grundtvig, III, No. 4, p. 15) comes from Bornholm, and is built up on the same motive as the story of "King Dragon," though presented in more concise form.

VI

EDERLAND, THE POULTRY-MAID

ONCE upon a time there was a woman who had three daughters. She was very ill and she expected to hear death knock at her door from day to day; so she called together her three daughters, and divided what she had among them. But she did not make an equal division: she gave the two older daughters, who were always nice to look at, and kept themselves well dressed, all that she had; and the youngest, little Ederland, received only a dough-pan, a broom-stick and an apron.

The mother lived but a short time, and when she had died, what she had left was divided as she had arranged. Then the two older sisters said to Ederland: "That shows you once more, Ederland, that our mother thought more of us than she did of you, for all she gave you was that wretched dough-pan, and the broom-stick and apron."

But little Ederland was patient, and held her tongue, and still believed that her mother had loved her just as much as she had her two sisters.

In the course of time all three sisters took service in a fine house. The two older sisters were in the

house itself, and helped with all the housework; but little Ederland was only the poultry-maid. Yet before long the master of the house noticed that his poultry had never been in better condition than since Ederland had taken charge; and therefore he praised her continually in her sisters' presence.

They did not enjoy hearing it at all. At last they decided to tell their master that Ederland could do much more, if only she felt like it. They knew positively, that she could get him a candlestick that would give light without a candle; and if she said she could not, it merely showed that she would not.

When their master heard this, he at once sent for Ederland and said to her: "I hear that you can get me a candlestick that gives light without a candle. I want to have it very much, and you must get it for me. It is useless for you to refuse, for I know that you can if you feel like it."

Little Ederland cried, and said she would like to oblige him, if only she knew how; but that he had set her a task she really could not accomplish. Yet her master would not believe her.

"All your speeches won't help you," he said. "You must get the candlestick for me, but you shall have two bushels of gold for getting it!"

Little Ederland left the house in tears, and went straight to her mother's grave. And as she stood there and cried, her mother rose from the grave

"—AND SAILED OUT UPON THE STORMY SEA, LETTING THE WAVES CARRY HER ALONG AS THEY CHOSE."

—*Page 47*

and said: "Do not cry! Go back home, and ask your master for two bushels of salt, take your broom-stick, set it up as a mast in the dough-pan, tie your apron to it for a sail, and sail out to sea with your two bushels of salt; then you will come to the place where you can get the candlestick that gives light without a candle!"

And with that the mother sank back into her grave, and little Ederland went home and asked her master for the two bushels of salt. She got them, and then set up her dough-pan with the broom-stick for a mast, and the apron for a sail, took her two bushels of salt, and sailed out upon the stormy sea, letting the waves carry her along as they chose.

She sailed a long way, but at last she landed on the island of the trolls, and went ashore with the two bushels of salt. Somewhere about she saw a house. She went up to it, climbed on the roof, and looked down the chimney. Down below stood the old troll mother, cooking mush for her sons. On the hearth, beside the kettle of mush, stood the candlestick that gave light without a candle. This was just what Ederland wanted, and when the old troll mother turned her back, she poured down her two bushels of salt into the mush. The old troll mother turned right around again, and tasted the mush; but it was terribly salty. So she took up a bucket to get some water to cook over the mush. Then

Ederland slipped down the chimney in a trice and ran after her, and as the old troll mother was stooping over the edge of the well to draw up the bucket, Ederland gave her a push so that she fell in head over heels, and did not come up again. Ederland now quickly secured the candlestick and ran down to her ship. She was no more than a short distance from land, when she saw the trolls come home, and a moment later they ran down to the strand and called after her: "Ederland, Ederland! You have thrown our mother into the well and taken our candlestick! If you ever come here again you will have to pay the price!"

But Ederland called back: "Well, I am coming back twice!" and sailed gayly home.

Her master was filled with joy when he saw the candlestick that gave light without a candle, and little Ederland received her two bushels of gold and was happy as well. But her two sisters grew more angry with each passing day at her good fortune, and their only thought was of how they might mar her pleasure. At last they again told their master that Ederland could do much more if she only would. She could obtain a horse with bells on all four legs, one that could be heard long before it was seen, and that could be found again, no matter how far it had strayed. Their master would much rather have had a horse of that kind even than the

candlestick he already possessed. He had Ederland called at once, and told her that he was well aware that she could obtain a horse that had bells on all four of its legs, which one could hear in the distance, and could always find if it strayed. She must get him that horse. Ederland cried and said she was only too willing to get it; but she did not know how. Yet her master would not content himself with her answer.

"You could, if you only would," he said. "You must get that horse for me and I will give you three bushels of gold for it."

Again Ederland went to her mother's grave and cried, and was very unhappy. And again her mother rose from the grave and said to her: "Do not cry, my little Ederland! Go home and ask your master for four bunches of tow, take them and sit down in your dough-pan with the broom-stick and the apron as before. Then you will reach the place where you can obtain the horse with the bells on all four legs."

Thereupon her mother sank back into the grave; while little Ederland went home and asked her master for the four bunches of tow. He gave them to her at once, and she sailed out to sea in her dough-pan, with the broom-stick for a mast, and her apron for a sail. This time she also landed on the island of the trolls. It was just at the time when the trolls

were at home, and were eating their dinner, and the horse with the bells on all four legs was grazing in the field before the house. Ederland slipped up to him, tied a bunch of tow around each leg, so that the bells could not ring, and led him down to the strand. Just as she was leading him into the boat, however, the bunch of tow about one of his legs fell off, the bell at once began to ring, and all the trolls hurried down to the strand. Little Ederland had led the horse safely aboard, and had just put a bit of water between the boat and the shore, when the trolls reached the beach. They fell into a terrible rage when they saw that Ederland was escaping with their horse, and called after her: "Ederland, Ederland! you pushed our old mother into the well, and took our candlestick, and now you have stolen our horse! When you come again you will have to pay for it!"

But Ederland called back to them: "Well, I am coming back once more!"

When Ederland reached home with the horse, her master was filled with joy. He gladly gave her the three bushels of gold he had promised her, and Ederland herself was very happy. But her two sisters were not at all pleased with her good fortune, and day and night they thought only of what harm they might do her. Before long they said to their master: "Ederland could get you something far bet-

ter than she has already obtained for you: a pig that stays just as fat as it was, though you cut as much bacon from it as ever you will."

That seemed the best of all to their master. Ederland had to come to him at once and he said to her: "I have heard that you can get a pig for me from which I may cut as much bacon as ever I will, while it stays as fat as it was. That pig I must have."

In vain Ederland wept and said: "I would, if only I could; but I cannot get any such pig for you." Her master would not listen to her.

"You can and must obtain that pig for me," he said, "and in return I will give you all the beautiful things which you see here."

But little Ederland was very sad. She went to her mother's grave and wept bitterly. Then her mother rose from her grave, and said to her: "Do not cry, my little Ederland! Go home and ask your master for two flitches of bacon, seat yourself in your boat, and sail out to sea. Then you will come to the place where you can get the pig." When she had said this she sank back into her grave.

But Ederland went home and got the two flitches of bacon, put them in her dough-pan with the broomstick for a mast and the apron for a sail, and the wind blew her across the sea to the island of the trolls. It was just the time when the trolls were taking their after-dinner nap. The pig was in the

meadow, but the trolls had hired a little boy to watch it.

Ederland ran up to the little boy and said to him: "These two flitches of bacon are for the trolls. Will you carry them over to them while I take care of the pig for you in the meantime?" The boy saw no harm in this, so he took the bacon and ran with it to the house. But as he was telling the trolls how he came by the two flitches of bacon, they at once thought that Ederland might have a hand in the matter again, so they ran down to the beach as fast as they could. And there Ederland had been unable to get the pig into the boat.

So the trolls seized her as well as the pig. They dragged Ederland into the house, and handed her over to the old troll father, telling him to slaughter her, and dish up a real tasty supper for them when they came back from work. Then the trolls went off, and Ederland stayed behind with the old troll father. He dragged up a great block of wood, put down the ax beside it and said to her: "Now lay down your head upon the block so that I can chop it off."

"Yes," said little Ederland, "I'm willing to do so, but I do not know how. First you will have to show me."

"Why," said the old troll father, "it is quite simple, you only need to do like this," and as he spoke

he laid his head down on the block. In a moment Ederland had seized the ax and chopped off his head with a single stroke. She at once put a night-cap on the head, laid it in bed, and thrust the body into the soup-kettle that hung over the hearth. Then she ran down to the beach, took the pig and sailed away in her boat.

Not long after the trolls came home, and at once fell upon the supper cooking over the stove. They were much surprised to find the meat so tough, when the person who had furnished it was so young. But they were hungry and managed to get it down. At last it occurred to one of them that their old father should also have his share. He went over to the bed and shook him; but they all were much frightened when they realized that his head alone was lying on the bed. At last they saw how everything had happened, left their supper and ran down to the beach. But by that time Ederland was far out to sea. The trolls came down in the most furious rage, and called after her: "Ederland, Ederland! you pushed our old mother into the well, you took our candlestick, you stole our horse, and now you have killed our old father and robbed us of our pig. If you come here again you will have to pay for it!"

But Ederland called back: "I shall never, never come back, and you need not expect me!"

So little Ederland sailed home, and her master re-

ceived her very joyfully, and soon after they married and lived in peace and contentment. Her sisters lived with her, but they did nothing day by day, save brood over Ederland's good fortune.

One day Ederland said to them: "If you feel like sailing, you are welcome to my boat." And the sisters decided to try it at once. They got into the boat, set sail and came to the island of the trolls. But when they got there the trolls seized them, cooked them and fried them, and were pleased as pleased could be to have made such a haul.

NOTE

"Ederland, the Poultry-Maid" (Grundtvig, I, No. 248, p. 605), with the aid of her dead mother wrests three precious things from their possessors, the trolls. One of them, the pig that never diminishes, no matter how much bacon is sliced from it, has a relative in the *Edda*, the boar Salhrimnir, who is roasted daily yet does not suffer thereby. The story comes from Seeland.

VII

THE PATIENT WOMAN

ONCE upon a time there was a king whom his people loved greatly. For many years they had been much worried because he would not decide to marry, and that as a result he had no heir to his throne. His subjects often asked him to take a queen, so that the kingdom might remain in the hands of his family. At last he said that he would take a wife; but he must be given a free choice, and they must promise and swear that they would honor his wife as queen, whether he chose a girl of the people, or one of the high nobility. And all of them swore that they would honor and love her, though her birth be never so humble.

The king had a gate-keeper, and he an only daughter. Her mother was dead, and she lived with her father, kept house for him and was the joy and comfort of his life. One day the gate-keeper was told that the king was about to ride out and might, perhaps, pay him a visit, so that he had better be prepared and put his best foot foremost. When the daughter heard this she asked her father whether she might not go out and look at the royal coach;

she could be fetching a pail of water, and that would serve as an excuse.

When the king arrived, he had the coach stopped outside just as she was coming along with her pail of water, and he went in to the old gate-keeper, and told him that he wished to marry his daughter. The gate-keeper refused to have anything to do with it. He said it was the worst thing that the king could wish; for he would not be happy in such a marriage, and neither would his daughter, and he earnestly begged him to change his mind. But this the king would not do. He had brought along rich clothes for the young girl, which she had to put on; she was bathed with the water she had fetched in her pail, was adorned with jewels, and driven back to the palace with the king.

When they reached the palace, the king told her she should be his lawful wife; but that she must promise him that she would never cry, and would never show temper, no matter what unpleasantness might be her portion; and this she promised.

They were married and at the end of a year the queen was blessed with a son. When her subjects heard the news their happiness exceeded all bounds, and they streamed to the palace to show their joy with cries and cheers. But the king came to his queen and said to her: "I have something to tell you. The people are enraged and object to your

little son's inheriting the kingdom, because he is of such humble birth; they insist that he be killed."

The queen replied: "Now you see what my father said, and what I said was true; yet we cannot alter it now." Whereupon a servant came in and demanded the child of her. She was alone, and she only begged him to kill the infant as quickly as possible; yet she showed no sign of sorrow, for she had promised never to show any but a cheerful face.

In the following year she was blessed with a little daughter, and hoped that she might be allowed to keep her. Her subjects were just as pleased at the arrival of the princess as they had been at that of the prince. But the king went in and said that the people had demanded that this child, too, be killed; and just as before a servant appeared to take the child away. She said: "Yes, it must be!" and only asked him to slay it quickly, so that it would not suffer.

Thereafter she lived and reigned as queen for fourteen years. Then one day the king came to her and said his subjects now demanded that he should choose another queen, one of noble birth, so that he might have a high-born son to succeed him on the throne; that it did not suit them that a woman of low degree should be their queen; and that she would have to go back home to her father. She told the king that she had long expected this; that since he

had not been willing that her children should live, she could easily understand that he did not wish to keep her either, and that she would gladly return to her father.

So she went home to her father, the old gate-keeper, who was very glad to have her again, and they joyfully celebrated their meeting. There stood her spindle with the flax in it, just as she had left it, and she sat down and spun the yarn to an end.

One day as she sat at home spinning, the king sent word that she was to come to the palace and suggest which dishes should be served at his wedding banquet. She did not want to go, but she had to, nevertheless. So she went to the palace, and gave her orders; and as she ordered so they did. On the day that the wedding was to take place, the king sent her a new gown, and had her informed that she was to come to the palace to see the wedding. And so she had to go through it against her wish. She put on her new gown and went to the palace, and there she had to stand at the king's left hand, while at his right stood a beautiful maiden, whom she thought must be the bride. But when it came time for the king to take the bride's hand, he took her hand instead, and she was remarried to him; and then he told her that the maiden whom she had thought to be the new bride, was her own daughter. Then her son also came in, and she learned that

these were her children, whom she had long thought dead.

For many years she had suffered great grief; yet in order to be true to her promise, she had kept her sorrow to herself. The king was well aware of this, for he knew her too well to think she was indifferent to the fate of her children. But since she had never shown her grief, he now honored her above measure, and her joy was now as great as her sorrow had been before. So she lived very happily with her husband for a number of years, loved and honored by the people—she and the king as well.

NOTE

"The Patient Woman" (Grundtvig, II, No. 310, p. 167), also from Seeland, is none other than Boccaccio's "Griselda." The Italian *novella* was widely circulated in the North; and passed from Germany to Denmark, from Denmark to Sweden, finally reaching Iceland. The incident which has the disowned queen, upon her return to her aged father, find the flax in the spindle, just as she had left it, and makes her—after the passing of fateful years—take up the unfinished thread she had begun to spin as a young girl and complete her work, is familiar.

VIII

THE CLEVER YOUNG GIRL

ONCE upon a time there lived a man and a woman who had an only daughter. One day a suitor came to call on her, so her mother sent her down into the cellar to draw some mead from the hogshead. When she had turned the spigot, it happened to occur to her: "Now if I get him—and I'll see that I get him—and we have a little boy—and our little boy has a headache—what will I wrap him up in?" And the jug stood under the spigot and the mead ran, and soon she was sitting in it up to her ankles.

Then her mother came down and asked: "Why are you sitting there?"

"Oh, I'm sitting here and thinking over that if I get him—and I'll see that I get him—and we have a little boy—and our little boy has a headache—what will we wrap him up in?"

"Yes, what will we wrap him up in?" said the mother. And the jug stood under the spigot, and soon they were sitting in the mead up to their knees. Then the man went down in order to see what had become of them.

"Why are you sitting down there?" he said. So his wife answered: "Oh, we are sitting here and thinking over that if she gets him—and she'll see that she gets him—and if they have a little boy—and their little boy has a headache—what can they wrap him up in?"

"Yes, what can they wrap him up in?" So he sat down beside them. And the jug stood under the spigot, and the mead ran and soon they were sitting in the mead up to their waists.

Now when all three failed to come back the suitor himself went down at last, and coming up to them asked: "Well, why are you sitting here?"

And then the man answered: "Oh, we are sitting here and thinking over that if she gets you—and she'll see that she gets you—and you have a little boy—and your little boy has a headache—what will you wrap him up in?"

But when the suitor heard that he went his way and never came back.

NOTE

"The Clever Girl" (Grundtvig, II, No. 446, p. 307) from Falster, is to be found in Grimm, who calls his heroine "Clever Elsie."

IX

THE SNAKE

THERE was once an old man who lived in a forest, and the only fire-wood he had was the old, rotted trees he could chop down. One day when his wife was standing before the hut splitting the rotted wood into small lengths, a young snake crawled out.

"Oh," said the woman to herself, "to look at that dumb creature crawling along the ground; it can have young while we human beings are childless!"

But the snake said: "If you want children so badly, why not take me in and bring me up?"

"What," cried the woman, "you know how to talk?"

Then she took the snake into her room, and made a bed for him under the stove. When her husband came home his wife told him that a little snake had crawled out of the rotted wood, and had at length said they should bring him up.

So they kept him under the stove until he was seven years old, when the snake thought he would like to marry. And the man said: "Well, I will have

to look around in the forest and see whether I cannot find a snake lady for you."

But the snake answered: "No, foster-father, I do not want a snake lady, I want a princess. Please, foster-father, start out early to-morrow morning, and find a princess for me."

"No, that is something I dare not do," said his foster-father, "for I am afraid the king will cast me into prison."

But the snake told him that it was quite safe to start out, if only he went about things in the right way. So he really did go to the castle, came to the grand stairway, and fell on his knees. Then he came to a grand room, and fell on his knees once more, and begged the king not to punish him, if he presented a request.

The king said: "Speak freely! Nothing shall be done to you."

Whereupon the man said: "There is a snake which I have kept under my stove of glazed tiles for all of seven years; and this snake wants to marry, and he wants the princess for a bride."

"Well," said the king, "if he can manage so that all the fruit-trees in my garden bear apples of gold and apples of silver, and golden and silver leaves, then he can have the princess."

When the man came home the snake said: "What luck did you have, foster-father?"

And he told him: "You will have to make all the fruit-trees in the king's garden bear apples of gold and apples of silver, and golden and silver leaves."

"That is easily done, foster-father," said the snake. "But you must go out now and gather all sorts of fruit pits, prune-pits, cherry-pits, and all the rest, in your little basket. Then in the evening you must go to the king's garden and throw a handful of them into each tree, and you must keep on doing this until you have visited every tree. Then, when you reach the garden gate, look around and see what has happened."

And when he reached the garden gate and looked around, it seemed as though the trees were all a-fire; they looked like pure gold.

The next day the man went to the king early in the morning, and asked him if he had seen his garden. The king said yes, he had seen it, and there was no doubt but that the snake had earned his daughter's hand; yet he would have to stand one more test, that is, he would have to inlay all his garden benches, and lay out all his garden walks with pearls and precious stones.

When the man came home the snake asked: "What luck did you have, foster-father?"

He answered: "You are to inlay all the king's garden benches, and lay out all his garden walks

with pearls and precious stones. How are we going to do it?"

The snake replied: "Oh, that is easily done, foster-father. You must go out and collect all sorts of old pots and pans and break them into small pieces, and in the evening you must put them in your little basket, and when it is quite dark, you must go to the castle, and throw the potsherds about everywhere on the benches and the garden walks. Then, when you leave the garden, you must look around and see how beautiful it has grown."

When he came home the snake asked him whether he had seen anything. He answered: "Yes, everything looked as though it had been gilded, all the benches and the garden walks."

Then the snake said: "And will you go to the castle to-morrow morning early and ask the king if he will give me his daughter now?"

So the next day, early in the morning, he went and asked the king: "Have you seen your garden?"

"Yes," answered the king, "yes, I have seen it, and there is no doubt but that the snake has earned my daughter's hand; yet he must stand one more test, he must gild my whole castle."

So the man went home to the snake.

"Well, what did the king say this time?" asked the latter.

"He says you are not through yet: you must gild his whole castle for him."

"That is easily done," said the snake. "All that foster-father need do is to go into the forest, and fetch all sorts of green leaves, and tie them up in a bundle. Then he must put the bundle in his little basket, go to the castle, and rub the walls as high as he can reach, with the bundle. And before he goes out of the door, he should look around."

And when he did, the whole castle seemed made of gold.

So the snake said to his foster-father: "Will you go now and ask the king if he will give me his daughter?"

And the king said: "Yes, he has earned her hand, and now he shall have her."

So the foster-father went home to the snake, and said to him: "Now you are to have the princess, so now you can crawl up to the castle." But the snake said, no, he wished to ride in a coach, and foster-father was to go to town, and order a coach for such and such a day, to drive the snake up to the castle. And as they drove through the streets the people were all curious, and ran along beside the coach to see the snake. But when they saw him they were seized with such fear that they ran back again into their houses, and did not dare look at him again. They drove up before the castle, the snake opened

the coach-door, crawled out and crawled toward the stairway. The royal father and mother were standing at a window, and saw the terrible reptile. They called to their daughter: "Take care, or he will devour you!"

She said, no, the snake had worked too hard to earn her. Then her parents ran into another room, and locked the door behind them, and the daughter was left standing there alone. The snake came crawling up and wound himself around her as she stood there, around her feet, her legs, till at last his mouth touched the girl's face. And then, suddenly, the snake's skin fell away from him, and there stood a most handsome prince. She embraced him with great joy, and was quite beside herself with happiness. And he told her the name of the kingdom from which he came, and the name of his father the king, and the way to get there.

As they were standing there, laughing and happy, the father and mother of the princess, hearing them laugh, thought that their child could not be in much danger. So they opened the door, and went in and saw the handsome prince standing before them. And they, too, were happy. Then the father saw the snake's skin, which lay on the floor, and he threw it into the fire and burned it up.

All at once the prince looked toward the ground and saw that his snake's skin had disappeared.

So he said: "What has become of my snake's skin?"

The father said: "I burned it up."

Then the prince said: "Here I am, out of luck once more."

For he should have given the skin to the person who had aided him. Now, since the skin had been burned up, he had nothing to give the one in question, and once more had to assume the forms of all sorts of animals. At length he turned into a dove, and flew all around the room because he could not get out, the doors and windows being shut. So he flew to a window, broke a pane and won free through the hole. But the broken glass was sharp, and cut his head in criss-cross fashion. Once out, he flew home to his father's castle. There he lay a-bed, so weak and ill that they had to fetch the doctors, though none of them were able to cure him. And there he abode in pain and misery, and not a soul could help him.

The princess thought of this, and felt very unhappy to think she should lose him in this way. Then it occurred to her that she could go to him. In the evening, when all was calm and quiet, she took what gold she had and started out. She also had a little flask of smelling-salts, which she took along, containing a small quantity of precious essence, to sniff in case she felt ill. With her little

package under her arm she glided into the forest.

When she had entered the forest she met a fox. "Where are you going?" said he to her. She told him that she was going to such and such a place, to the royal castle where, so she had heard, the prince was lying ill. And she asked the fox: "Will you show me the way?"—for the country was new to her, and she did not know the road. So the fox went on ahead.

They went on and on until they came to a green glade in the forest through which a brooklet was running. Then the fox said: "You must lie down here, and drink of this water"—for this water had strengthening qualities, and the princess was much wearied by her wanderings. The fox asked her whether she could hear the lovely bird-song that sounded in the forest at night. She told him that she could. Then the fox asked her again whether she could not understand what the birds were singing.

"No," said she, she did not know.

"They are singing that if the wounds of the prince who is now lying ill, were to be anointed with their blood, he would get well again."

"Can you get the blood of these birds?" she asked the fox.

"What will you give me if I can get it for you?" asked the fox.

"I will give you the whole package of gold I have with me," said the princess.

"Well, I can do nothing until I have slipped behind their green curtains," said the fox.

So when the birds had all gone to sleep, the fox climbed the trees and bit their heads off, one after another, and threw them down to the princess. She had nothing in which to catch the blood, so she emptied her little flask of smelling-salts, and let some blood from each bird drip into it.

Then the fox said: "Now you think you have gained your end because you have the blood of the birds. But it will do you no good without some of my own as well." And he prepared to say good-by. "I cannot go any further in your company."

Then the princess said: "Oh, but you must show me the way through the forest!"

"What will you give me if I do?" said the fox.

So she said: "I have nothing more to give you, for you have all my gold; but perhaps you might like to have the little gold ring on my finger?" He took the little gold ring and showed her the way through the forest. And as she went she thought of how she might arrange to secure some of the blood of the fox. The fox went on ahead, and she followed him, and as they went along her foot struck a pebble, and she picked it up. The fox ran with his head thrown back, because of the package of

gold he was holding in his jaws. So the princess took the pebble against which she had stumbled, and struck the fox in the neck with it until the blood gushed forth. Then she ran up to him, held her little flask under the wound, and filled it with the blood of the fox. She then took back the gold she had given him as a reward for leading her through the forest, for the fox could not prevent it.

Now she went on until she reached the castle. She entered, giving herself out for a wise woman who could restore the prince to health. They informed the king, and he came to her and inquired whether she really thought that she could cure his son.

"Yes," said she, "but you must make an agreement with me that in case I cure him, he is to be my husband."

"It shall be as you say, my daughter," said the king. "If you can cure him, then he shall be your husband."

So she asked to be shown the room in which the prince was lying. When she came in the window was darkened, for his head was so weak that he could not stand the light. So she went to him and pushed back the hair from the wounds on his head, and allowed the blood from her little flask to drip on them. Then she patted him on the head as hard as she could, so that the blood might penetrate

deeply into the wounds. And when the blood had been well driven into his wounds, the prince regained his strength, could sit up in bed, and in a few minutes was completely cured. Then she slipped behind the curtain so that he might not see her.

His father came in, having heard him stirring about the room, and the prince asked his father who had cured him. And his father told him it was a wise young girl, who claimed him for a husband now that she had restored him to health. But the prince said: "Oh, no, father! I have a love in such and such a kingdom, and I strove mightily to gain her hand, and she delivered me from my snake's skin." And when the princess heard how true he was to her, she came out from behind the curtain and said: "Here I am, who delivered you from your snake's skin!"

Then they were glad and happy in each other's company as they had never been before. She told him how she had cured him with the blood of the birds and of the fox. And he asked his father, the king, if he might have the kingdom, and the princess whom he wished to marry. She was the princess so and so, from such and such a kingdom. And could he travel with her to her father's castle and celebrate the wedding there?

So they all set forth, the king's son and the prin-

cess, the king and the queen, in two coaches; the old folk in one and the young folk in the other. And they traveled on until they came to the hut of the foster-parents in the forest. They begged them to ride to the castle along with them, and help celebrate the wedding; and after the wedding the bride and groom invited the foster-parents to come to the castle, where he would treat them as well as they had treated him when he was only a snake.

NOTE

In "The Snake" (Grundtvig, II, No. 314, p. 191) from Morso, the prince whom enchantment has turned into a snake, is delivered by a kiss, but since the snake's skin he has cast off has been burned, is obliged to flee in another animal transformation, and the princess regains him only at the cost of much trouble.

X

THE GOOD SWORD

ONCE upon a time there was an old widower who had an only son, who lived with him. The old man was a poacher, and that is how he supported his son and himself. But when he had grown old, he became weaker and weaker, and sadly told his son that soon he would no longer be able to hunt for him, and that ere long he would have to die. His son comforted him, and assured him he would soon recover; but his father said no, ere long he would have to die, and he had nothing to leave him. What they had would just about do for his own funeral. Yet he had one possession that might prove to be a blessing to his son. It was only a sword, and badly rusted at that, but it would conquer any one against whom it was raised.

Before long the father died, and his son had to sell what he left in order to bury him. All that he kept of his inheritance was the rusty sword. Now he had to find work to do, and this was not easy, since he had never learned a trade, and at the best could only herd sheep. So he went to the village, and had to content himself with hiring out as a shep-

herd. His master sent him out with the sheep, and warned him to keep away from three meadows, which belonged to three mountain trolls. They lived on a hill known as "Troll's Mount," and if one of his sheep were to stray to their meadow, the mountain troll would come, and not only carry off the sheep, but their shepherd as well. As to his carrying off the shepherd, his master only said that to frighten the young fellow, because it was not true.

The new shepherd promised to take good care of the sheep, and so he did; for he lost not a single one, and his master was well content with him. Once he happened to think of his sword, and that it might be of use to help him should he have trouble with the mountain troll. And he determined to try it on him some time.

So one day he let his sheep stray into the first of the forbidden meadows, and at once the mountain troll, raging and roaring, rushed up to him, and asked who had allowed him to pasture his sheep in that meadow.

"I allowed myself to do it," said the young fellow, and when the mountain troll threatened to carry him off together with his sheep, he attacked him and struck him dead with his sword.

Now the first meadow belonged to him; but not long after the sheep felt like visiting the second meadow, and the young fellow let them go. There-

upon the second mountain troll rushed up to him in a towering rage, and the young fellow slew him, too. It was the same with regard to the third meadow, and the lad came home with his sheep, singing.

Now he had a fancy to see "Troll's Mount," and there he found three steeds, a red, a white and a yellow one, and three dogs, also red, white and yellow in color. And for each steed there was a saddle, and a full suit of armor as well, and they, too, were red, white and yellow in color. Besides, there was fodder for the horses, and food for the dogs, and gold and silver in abundance. The shepherd lad was naturally much pleased with all the splendor that had come into his possession, and went home singing. Then his master had him told by the farm-hand that although he was extraordinarily well satisfied with him, he wished he would stop singing. The young fellow could not see what harm his singing did. And at first the farm-hand did not want to tell him the true reason, and said he ought to be willing to stop because his master wished it. But at last the young fellow induced the farm-hand to tell him why he was not to sing, though he forbade him to tell any one else.

It seems that great sorrow reigned throughout the land, because the king had been compelled to betroth his three daughters to three trolls. Soon the trolls were to come to fetch them, and the king had

promised a third of the kingdom to any man who could deliver one of them, and the hand of the princess he delivered as well. "It is for that reason you must not sing here in town, although out in the fields it makes no difference," said the farm-hand.

The young fellow could not help thinking about the story of the poor princesses, and it occurred to him that perhaps he might be able to save them. He could leave his sheep to their own devices with a clear conscience, since now he had nothing to fear from the mountain trolls, and he went to town to find out what was being said about the calamity that was due. There he learned on which day the oldest princess would be led out to the troll, and putting on his red armor, he mounted his red steed, and with the red dog rode out to the place where the troll was to receive the princess. She came driving up in a coach, and the coachman climbed a tree in his fear of the troll. And at the very moment the red knight came riding up, a three-headed troll rose out of the sea. The knight rode up to him, hewed off all three of his heads with his rusty sword, cut out their tongues, and rode off again.

Then the coachman climbed down from his tree, and threatened to kill the princess unless she promised to say that he had delivered her. She had to promise, he gathered up the heads, and they drove home.

Eight days later the second princess was driven out, and all happened as before. The coachman sought safety in a tree, and a yellow knight came riding up on a yellow horse followed by a yellow dog. Then out of the sea rose a monster with six heads. The knight cut off the heads, tore out the tongues, and rode off again. This coachman also threatened this princess, and demanded she say he had delivered her.

Eight days later the youngest princess was driven out to be handed over to her troll, and again all happened as before. The coachman climbed a tree, and a white knight appeared on a white horse, followed by a white dog. The troll rose out of the sea and he had nine heads; but the knight hewed them all off, and tore out their tongues. When the princess saw that he had delivered her she took off her chain of gold and tried to throw it around his neck; but it fell on his head. He had curly hair, and feeling something on his head, he gathered it up and wound it in his hair, and put his helmet over it so that no one could see it. Then he rode away. This coachman acted just as the others had, and compelled the princess to say that he had delivered her.

The greatest joy now reigned in the castle, and all three princesses were to be married on the same day. The young fellow by now had had his fill of sheep-herding, and took leave of his master, who

did not like to let him go, since he had never done so well with his sheep as when the young fellow had had them in charge. But there was nothing he could do; his shepherd wanted to go, and so they settled their accounts and off he went.

He went to another village near-by, and took a room in the inn, where he heard much talk of the splendor with which the coming triple wedding was to be celebrated. The host of the tavern mentioned how pleasant it would be to have a chance to taste a bit of the fine wheat bread that was baked in the castle.

"Well," said the young fellow, "that's not at all impossible. My dog can get it," and he sent his red dog to get some wheat bread. The dog ran to the castle and scratched at one door after another. The people opened their doors for him, and in this way he reached the room where the wheat bread lay. He seized a loaf of bread, and the king said that they were to let him keep it, so he came safely home with it. Then the tavern-keeper talked about how pleasant it would be to sample the roast that came from the kitchens of the castle. The young fellow sent his yellow dog to fetch some of the roast, and the dog ran to the castle, sniffed about for the kitchen, seized the whole roast and ran off with it, and the king gave order to let him go. Now when the tavern-keeper saw the roast, he wished to have

wine as well, and the young fellow sent his white dog to fetch it. And he actually found the wine-cellar, took a bottle of wine, and ran into the room where all the princesses and their husbands-to-be were seated.

When the youngest princess saw the white dog she clapped her hands, and said that his master had delivered her. Her betrothed grew angry, and said that hitherto she had always declared that he had delivered her, and what did she mean by saying what she did? But she insisted that the white dog's master had delivered her. So the king sent out men to follow the dog, in order to discover his master and bring him to the castle. The dog ran as fast as ever he could, so that the men could scarcely follow him. Yet they reached the tavern, puffing and groaning, and told the young fellow that he was to come to the castle. When he got there he asked whether his dog had misbehaved in the castle in any way that called for punishment. He himself knew of nothing he could have done.

"Yes," said the king, "he has stolen a bottle of wine. Not that that matters; but you must come into the great hall."

The young fellow excused himself, and said that he was not used to meeting such fine people. But he could not help himself, for the king insisted that he enter. So he went into the great hall, and no

sooner had the youngest princess seen him than she declared that he was her deliverer. When her betrothed grew angry, and the others would not believe it, she asked him whether he did not have her chain of gold. So he drew it from his curls, and all saw that it was the princess's own. But her betrothed spoke of the nine heads which he had. Whereupon the young fellow produced the nine tongues for the nine heads, and all recognized that he had delivered the three princesses. The three deceivers were beheaded, and the true deliverer received the youngest princess and the third part of the kingdom at once, and after her father's death the remainder of it.

NOTE

"The Good Sword" (Grundtvig, III, No. 83, p. 120), from West Jutland, tells of an invincible weapon in the hands of a poor shepherd-boy, and recalls the affectionate veneration with which the sword was regarded in ancient times, a feeling which gave it an individuality and raised it to the status of a creature magically endowed with a soul, in whose name even oaths were taken.

XI

JACK WITH THE GOLDEN HAIR

ONCE upon a time there was a fisherman who made his living fishing. One day, when he was out casting his nets, a bad storm came up, and it so happened that a merman swam up to him and asked him whether he would like to get home. "Yes," said the fisherman, he'd like to get home very much, but it did not look as though he would, since the weather was so bad, and he was alone in his little boat. "Well," said the merman, "if the fisherman would give him the youngest thing in the house when he got home, he should have good weather and fisherman's luck; and he would not demand the youngest thing in his house from him for full twelve years. Yes, said the man, the merman was welcome to the youngest thing in his home, for he thought that such a condition might be susceptible to change.

The weather at once cleared up, and the fisherman caught so many fish that their number was past belief. Then he sailed to a trading port and sold them, and put out to sea again to catch more. He

returned to port several times, sold his fish, and collected a great deal of money.

At home his wife had been mourning for him, because he had not returned with the other fishermen, and she thought he was dead. The others put out to sea again when the weather changed, and there they came across him, standing in his boat and hauling in the fishes as fast as he could.

"God be praised, there you are safe and sound!" said they. "Your wife has been mourning for you, because she feels sure you have been drowned."

"She need not worry about me," said the man, "for I'm going home to her now." He had money, he had fish, and he had all sorts of things that he had bought in the city, and so home he went. But when he came home there was a little baby boy waiting for him—the youngest thing in the house. The fisherman said nothing about his talk with the merman, and that he would have to give up his child after twelve years. His fisherman's luck was constant, and he earned a great deal of money. In the course of time he bought a little farm and kept two horses.

The boy who had come into the world during his father's absence at sea, grew up and became strong. His name was Jack, and as soon as he was big enough, he learned to handle the plough. When his father was alone with the boy, he often had to cry.

Once, when the boy was nearly twelve years old, he asked his father why it was that he always cried. So his father told him it was useless to conceal it any longer, how he had been caught in a storm at sea, and had been obliged to promise a merman the youngest thing he would find in the house when he got home. But the merman did not want him until he was twelve years of age. The boy's twelfth birthday was near at hand, and he had to tell his wife. She would not be comforted: they had only this child, and now they were to lose it, and to lose it in such a way.

But Jack himself said: "I have no objection; if he wants to have me, he will probably do me no harm." And when he was about to leave, and his mother said that at least he ought to put on his best clothes, Jack answered: "No, if he wants me, let him clothe and feed me, too!"

So his father took him out to sea, to the appointed place, where the merman was to receive him. And the merman came and took the boy with him, and his father went back home again, and his fisherman's luck remained constant as before.

Now when Jack came down to the merman's abode, all he had to do was to take care of a horse and a lion; it was his business to spread fire before, and oats behind them. Every day the merman drove his goats into the wood, and in the mean-

time Jack was left to shift for himself, and as has been said, was supposed to take care of the two animals.

One day the horse said to him: "That's not the way to do! You should lay the fire behind and the oats before us!"

"What!" cried Jack, "are you able to talk?"

"Yes," said the horse, "I have known how to talk for a number of years; but if you are true to us, you can deliver us and yourself as well."

"That is just what I'll do!" replied Jack.

Then the horse said: "Go into the great room! There you will see three bottles standing on the table, and a great sword hanging from the wall. Drink first from the one bottle, then from the next, and finally from the third. And then see whether you are able to lift the sword. And there is a comb lying on the table with which you must comb your hair."

Jack did as the horse told him. He went into the room, and there he saw the bottles. On the first one was written: "If you drink from this bottle you will be strong." And when he had drunk from it he was able to move the sword a little from its place. Then he took the second bottle. On it was written: "If you drink from this bottle you will become stronger." And when he had drunk from it he found he was able to lift down the sword from

the wall. Then he took the third bottle. On it was written: "If you drink from this bottle your strength will be measureless." And when he had drunk from it, he tried the sword, and found that he could swing it with ease. Then he took the comb and combed his hair; and his hair grew so long that it reached to his heels, and it shone like gold. Then he returned to the horse, and told him he had done as he had been told, and that now he could swing the sword.

Then the horse said: "Now you must pack up all the eatables, and as much gold and silver as we can carry, and then put on the kirtle hanging on the wall, and gird on the sword." Jack did all this, mounted the horse, unloosed the lion, and rode off, the lion running after.

In the evening, when the merman came back with his goats, he found Jack, the horse and the lion gone. He grew furiously angry and began to pursue them. Then the horse said to Jack: "Turn around and look back!"

"It seems to me as though the sky were getting quite black and gray behind us," said Jack.

"Yes, it is the merman, who is chasing us," replied the horse. "Tear a hair out of my tail, and one out of my mane, and order so great a forest to grow behind us, that the merman will not be able to pass through, and will have to go home

to get ax and saw, in order to chop his way through."

And the merman came to the forest, and had he not been furious before, he would surely have become so now; for he had to turn back and get ax and saw in order to chop his way through the trees. Now they had a long, good start; but suddenly the horse said: "Turn around and look back!"

"Yes," said Jack, "it again seems to me as though the sky were getting black and gray behind us; but it is much worse this time than before."

"Tear a hair out of my tail, and one out of my mane," said the horse, "and order so deep a sea to spread out behind us, that the merman cannot pass through it until he has brought his goats to drink it up."

When the merman reached the sea, he grew still more furious, ran back home and brought his goats to drink it up. Now they had another long, good start. After a while the horse said: "Look around once more. Is there anything to be seen?"

"Yes," said Jack. "Now it seems to me as though there were a fire burning behind us, high up in the air."

"Well," said the horse, "the merman is really furious now. He is so furious that one could strike sparks from his eyes. Pull a hair out of my tail, and one out of my mane, and order such a hot fire

to burn behind us that the merman cannot cross it unless he goes home and fetches his steel pole to help him leap across."

So the merman had to go back and fetch his steel pole, and he nearly missed finding it. He looked in every nook and corner, and at last came to his old mother, who sat in one of them.

"What is the matter, little son?" said she. "Why are you so angry?" For he darted about everywhere dealing blows and punches. Well, said he, it was not to be wondered at that he was angry: the lad whom he had brought up, had stolen all his property, and though he had pursued him, he could not reach him; first he had planted a forest in front of him, and the second time a sea, and now it was a fire; and he could not cross the fire unless he found his steel pole, to help him jump across.

"Heaven above!" cried the old woman. "Had not I better go along with you? I think I could jump more lightly than you could!"

So he took her on his back and dragged her along. When they came to the fire, he thrust the pole into the middle of it so that the old woman could take hold and jump across; and she jumped and jumped right into the flames. There she sat and cried: "Heaven above! little son, do come and help me out of the fire!" So he jumped into the fire in turn, and there they both sat and were burned up.

Then the horse said: "Well, now we are rid of the merman. Can you give us something to eat? For we are hungry, and whatever you can eat we can eat as well." When they had eaten, the horse spoke again: "There is a king's castle here in this forest. You can go there and take service; but you must come out here every evening, and bring us something to eat."

Jack went to the castle and was taken in as a stable boy. He had to wash, groom and curry the horses, and the head groom was very well satisfied with him. When they gave him his supper in the evening, he took it out into the forest to the horse, who asked him: "Well, what luck did you have, Jack?"

"I'm in the stable," said Jack, "and they treat me very well indeed."

"That will never do," said the horse. "You cannot stay there. To-morrow, after you have washed the horses, rub dust and straw into their coats."

And Jack did as he said. The following morning, after he had washed and curried the horses, he took dust and straw and rubbed it into their coats. The head groom came and saw what he had done, grew angry, took his whip and gave Jack a terrible flogging. When the cook of the castle saw that, he felt sorry for the boy and he said: "It is a sin and a shame to beat the little fellow so unmercifully!"

No, said the head groom, he had deserved it, because he had rubbed dust and straw into the horses' coats after he had washed them.

"Give the boy to me," said the cook, "I can make good use of such a lad."

So Jack came into the kitchen, where he was even better placed than he had been in the stable. He was given leavings of bread and meat and his supper as well, and could take it all out to the horse. In the evening he went into the forest, and told him what had happened, that now he was in the kitchen, and was treated very well. But the horse said: "That will not do either; you cannot stay there. To-morrow morning, after you have cleaned and rinsed, you must dirty the dishes again, so that they will drive you out."

"But then I'll get such a hard beating," said Jack.

"You must pay no attention to that," said the horse, "you will be compensated for your beating in due time."

And Jack did as the horse told him. The next day, after he had rinsed the dishes, he dirtied them again. When the cook saw this he fell into a rage, seized his poker and gave the boy a good thrashing. Jack cried and wailed till the gardener came along and heard him.

"Why, how can you beat that poor boy so?" he cried.

"Because he is so mischievous," said the cook. "First he rinses the dishes, and then he dirties them again."

"Give me the little fellow," said the gardener. "I can make good use of him in the garden."

So Jack went to the garden with the gardener, and in the evening, when he had been given his supper, he ran out into the forest to the horse.

"I'm in the garden now, and they treat me very well," said Jack.

"Well, see to it that you stay there," said the horse. And Jack was glad to hear him say so, for he had no mind to change service again as he had been doing.

Jack stayed with the gardener and was well treated, and every evening he went out to see the horse. The king had three daughters, and the gardener was accustomed to make up a bouquet for each of them every Saturday. On the first day that Jack was there he begged the gardener to let him make up a bouquet. But the gardener would not risk it; he was afraid that Jack would not attend to it properly, and he had just enough flowers to answer his purpose. But Jack begged and begged until finally he was given permission, and he made

up a little bouquet which was much prettier than any ever made up by the gardener. And now they had to bring the bouquets—Jack wanted to deliver his in person—to a certain door, through which the princesses passed at a given hour, and received the flowers. Here Jack saw the princesses for the first time, and he looked carefully to find the one to whom he would best like to give his bouquet, and lo and behold, it was the youngest princess! Jack was wearing an old dirty cap, that covered his wonderful hair, and this cap he never took off. When he came to the door where the princesses and the courtiers were standing, he was told to take off his cap.

"No, I am scabby!" said Jack, and from that time on every one called him "Scabby Jack." And when the royal family would go down into the gardens and walk there, they often amused themselves by saying to Jack: "Take off your cap!" for then he would always answer: "I am scabby."

So he gave his bouquet to the youngest princess, and she tipped him with gold pieces. He showed these to the gardener, and said how odd it was that she should have given him counters. Then the gardener relieved him of the gold pieces, and gave him copper coins instead; for those he recognized.

When Saturday came around again the gardener

wanted Jack to make up all three of the bouquets; but Jack would only make up one, and that he gave to the youngest princess. She told him again to take off his cap, but he again said no, that he was scabby. So she tipped him again with gold pieces for which the gardener gave him copper coins. Time passed, and people began to tease the princess about Scabby Jack, and she had to hear his name every hour of the day.

Now it happened that a war broke out, and the whole country was besieged by the army of the foe. All who had not already gone to the war then wished to take part in it, and every one was given a horse. Scabby Jack asked for a horse, too; but there was nothing but an old mare left, who could only move on three legs. So they gave the mare to Jack, and he rode off on the three-legged beast, with every one laughing and grinning behind his back. He rode away from the others into the wood, where the horse and the lion had stayed, and where he had hidden his sword and kirtle. There he hid his ragged old jacket and his old cap, tied his three-legged mare to a tree, and mounted the merman's horse. His golden hair hung down his back, he had his sword at his side, and the lion followed him. In this wise he rode to the battle-field, and halted a short distance away to see how matters stood. The enemy was so powerful that he was about to gain the upper hand. So

the horse said to Jack: "Blow into the handle of your sword!" And soldiers rose from the earth in such numbers, horsemen and footmen, that one could not see the ground. Then Jack hewed about him with his sword, and the lion bit and clawed, and they slew many of the enemy. And when the enemy had been defeated the horse said to Jack: "Now blow into the other end of your sword!" And then all the soldiers disappeared. An armistice was then proclaimed until the following day, when the battle was to continue.

The king ordered his people to bring him the man who had won the battle. But Jack rode back into the forest, and they could not find him. When he got there, he unsaddled his horse, hid his kirtle and his sword, stuffed his wonderful hair under his cap, got on his three-legged mare and rode back to the castle. He was the first to get back, and was able to tell all that had happened; how some one had come with a great number of soldiers and had beaten the foe.

On the following day the same thing happened. Jack came and asked for a horse, so that he might ride out and look on. Well, said the king, since he was to be his son-in-law some day, he would have to give him a horse. For that was the jest that they played on the youngest princess, saying that she was to marry Scabby Jack. So he was once more

given the three-legged mare, rode out to the forest, tied her to a tree, and mounted his own horse, with his sword at his side, his golden hair hanging down his back, and the lion following after him. Thus he rode on and drew rein by the king's army, and watched the enemy slay the king's soldiers. Then the horse said to him: "Blow into the handle of your sword!" And soldiers rose from the earth in such numbers, horsemen and footmen, that it was impossible to count them. And Jack hewed and thrust, and the lion bit and clawed so many of the foe that the latter were again defeated. Then the horse said: "Blow into the other end of your sword!" And the soldiers, every last man of them, disappeared.

The king and his people were well aware that the same person had helped them once more, and they rode after him; but he reached the forest before any one caught up with him. The king could not understand where the soldiers who had aided him came from, for he had asked no other nation's help. Jack unsaddled his horse again, hid his kirtle and his sword, stuffed his hair under his cap, put on his old rags and rode home on the three-legged mare. He was the first one to get back, and all crowded around him to hear what had happened. Jack informed them that strange troops had once more appeared, and had aided them and defeated the enemy. There

was an armistice declared until the third day, and then the battle was to be resumed.

When the others rode off, Jack also wanted to go along and watch. And, as he had the last time, the king said that Jack should have a horse, since after all, he was to become his son-in-law. The three-legged mare was the only horse left, and was once more given to him. He rode to the forest, took off his old jacket and put on his war mantle, mounted his own horse, and with his sword at his side, his golden hair hanging down his back, and followed by the lion, he drew rein by the army and looked on. Now this day the king himself took part in the battle, for he wanted to end the war. And the enemy were about to capture the king, when the horse said: "Blow into the handle of your sword!" And at once so many soldiers rose from the earth, horsemen and footmen, that they hid the ground. Jack rode upon the enemy, hewed and thrust, and the lion bit and tore to pieces all who got in his way. This went on till not one of the enemy was left, for they had all fallen. Then the horse said: "Blow into the other end of your sword!" And all the soldiers, every last man of them disappeared. The king had them blow the alarm, to encircle the stranger, whoever he might be, for he was the same who had now appeared for the third time. And they formed so thick a ring around Jack that he saw no

way out. Yet it seemed to him he could glimpse a little gap in the ranks near the king, and he tried to break through there; but the king struck out at him so lustily that he wounded him in the leg. Nevertheless, Jack rode quickly to the forest, unsaddled his horse, hid his sword, put on his old clothes, stuffed his hair beneath his cap, mounted his three-legged mare again, and was the first back at the castle.

When he reached home the youngest princess was standing in the door, and asked how her father had fared; for she well knew that matters must have come to a serious pass when he himself had gone to battle. Jack told her that the same stranger who had already twice appeared, had come again that day, and had destroyed the enemy to the last man; but no one knew who he might be. Jack's leg was bleeding, and he asked whether she could not give him something to tie around it. The three-legged mare had run into a tree with him in the forest, he said. The princess had a silk handkerchief in her hand, embroidered with her name, and she gave it to him to tie around his leg. Then the others came back from the war, the king among them, and the war was over.

Now the king had not the slightest idea of where he was to look for the stranger who had aided him, though he much desired to know who he was. So he

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had them proclaim in his own and in every other kingdom that whoever had been wounded in the leg should have his daughter and half the kingdom, and after his death the whole of it, if he could appear in the costume worn by the unknown stranger. And high and low came from his own kingdom, and from foreign countries. Many had wounded themselves in one leg, others in another; they thought perhaps that would answer, and that they would receive the princess and the kingdom and be made kings. At last they had all appeared, but not one could show the wound given by the king. Now there was only Scabby Jack left, who had also looked on at the battles, and had ridden the three-legged mare. So he was told to put in an appearance, though he said it was foolish, since he had only ridden out on the old three-legged mare, and looked on. But he had to show himself, nevertheless.

When he came to the castle, the servants said to him: "Take off your cap, Jack!"

"I am scabby," said Jack. He went on and came to the king.

"Take off your cap, Jack!" said the courtiers, "the king wants to speak to you."

"I am scabby," said Jack. The princesses were in the room in which he was to show himself, and both the older princesses nudged each other, and laughed at the youngest: here was Scabby Jack,

surely he was the one who had defeated the enemy, and now he would get his princess. The king greeted Jack and said, this was his son-in-law coming, he had been to the wars as well as the rest, and wanted to show himself. A couple of courtiers who were standing there helped him show his leg. Yes, said he, he knew he had a bad leg, the old three-legged mare had run against a tree with him in the forest. The king wished to see the wound, and when it came to be exposed, there was the princess's handkerchief wound around it. And if they had not already teased her enough about Scabby Jack they did now, and every one had his joke. But when the king had looked at his leg he saw at once that it was the very wound he himself had made. He gave Jack's cap a knock, so that it rolled all the way to the door, and his golden hair fell down over his back. Then the king said: "You are not the man we thought you were. I see that we were mistaken in you."

Now his leg was properly dressed, so that it would heal again, and the king told him to come to him in the same costume he had worn in battle. For he saw that Jack had been his deliverer, and that he had the right to choose the one he preferred among his daughters. Jack begged him to wait while he went to the forest, and promised to be back in a jiffy. So he hurried there and threw away his old

rags, for which he had no further use. Then he went to the horse and told him all that had happened. Yes, said the horse, he knew all about it. Then Jack asked the horse which of the king's daughters he should choose.

"You must take the youngest," said the horse, "they made fun of her because of you, so she is the one you should choose."

Then Jack put on his cloak and mounted the horse. With his sword at his side, his golden hair hanging down his back, and the lion following after, he rode to the castle. And now it was plain to all that he was the one who had played the hero in the war. Every one went to meet him, and the king asked which one of his daughters he wanted. Jack answered, just as the horse had told him to, that he chose the youngest, because they had made so much fun of her on his account that now he liked her best of all. The wedding-day was set and Jack was made king.

The horse and the lion were led to the stable, and Jack went there every day to talk to the horse, which ate just what Jack did. On his wedding-day Jack was down in the stable with the horse, as usual, when the latter said to him: "Now that I have rescued you from the merman, and helped you to make yourself king, will you deliver me?"

Why, of course, was Jack's answer, he would if he could possibly do so.

"Then you must chop off my head, and put it where my tail is, and you must chop off my tail and put it where my head was."

"I cannot do that," said Jack, "you have been so kind to me that I could not treat you so."

"If you do not do it," said the horse, "you shall once more be just as unhappy as you were when the merman was after us."

So Jack had to do it. But no sooner was it done than the horse turned into the handsomest prince one could wish to see. He went up into the castle with Jack to see the king, and the king recognized him at once—he was the crown-prince of his own land. And the king was much alarmed, for he had already given the kingdom to Jack.

"That makes no difference," said the prince, "for if it had not been for Jack, I should never have been delivered. And if I had not been delivered, then Jack would never have become king; so I do not begrudge Jack the kingdom."

And the prince remained Jack's friend and trusty counsellor. The lion was a lion, and remained a lion, who went to war with them, and overcame all who fought with him. But the fame of the sword had become so widespread that after a time none

dared to go to war with Jack, and all of them spent their lives in peace and quiet.

NOTE

"Jack with the Golden Hair" (Grundtvig, II, No. 331, p. 170), comes from Vendsyssel. It is the story of "Golden Hair" or "Scabby-Head," cherished far and wide during the Middle Ages because of its adventurous character. In its colorful development we catch a glimmer of the old belief in the werewolf, when the hero refuses to remove his cap because of his chronic scurf, or as in the case of many variants, when he is regarded as an animal. The flight by the aid of magic from the merman's kingdom is to be found in its essentials in the fairy-tales of all peoples.

XII

THE TREE OF HEALTH

THERE was once a man who had three sons. When he lay on his death-bed, he called them to him, and told them he had nothing to leave them save an orchard, which they were to divide among themselves. One of the trees of the orchard bore the apples of health; but which tree it was, and where it stood, that he refused to tell them.

So the man died, and his sons went about dividing their heritage. But the youngest son was so small that he was not allowed to be present when the division was made. The two older brothers divided the orchard between them, and a single tree in the middle of the orchard was all they allotted their little brother. They gave him no land at all; for they thought that if ill luck would have it that his tree bore the apples of health, why, they could still gather up the apples which fell from it on the ground that was theirs.

One day it was noised about that the princess of that country was dangerously ill, and that the king had promised the princess and half the kingdom to whomever could restore her to health. So the

brothers decided to try their luck without delay. The oldest at once ran into the orchard, picked an apple from every tree, laid them in a basket, and betook himself to the castle. The way led through a great forest, and as he entered it he met an old woman. "Good-day," said the old woman, "and what might you have in your basket?"

"Frogs and toads," said the young fellow, "and what business is it of yours?"

"Frogs and toads it is and shall be," said the old woman and continued on her way.

The young fellow went on and came to the sentry before the castle.

"What do you wish, my son?" the sentry asked.

"I have apples of health in my basket, and I want to go into the castle and cure the princess."

All well and good, but first the sentry would take a look at the basket. And when they lifted the cover it was swarming with frogs and toads. So the guards gave the young fellow a good beating and drove him off.

In the meantime the second brother had run into his half of the orchard, and had picked a basket of apples from all his trees. When he came to the forest he met the same old woman, who bade him good-day and asked him what he had in his basket.

"Snakes and worms," he answered, just as gruffly as his brother.

So she said to him, "Snakes and worms it is and shall be," just as she had to his brother. He came to the guard and asked to be admitted with his apples of health; but when they lifted the cover of his basket, the most disgusting snakes and worms came crawling out in heaps. And so they gave him a sound beating, just as they had his brother.

At last the youngest brother determined to try his luck. He picked some apples from his tree and set forth. In the forest he met the old woman.

"Good-day," said she, "and what might you have in your basket?"

"Good-day to you," said the little fellow, pleasantly, "I have apples of health in my basket."

"Apples of health it is and shall be," said the old woman, and passed on.

The little fellow went his way, and when he came out of the forest, the road ran along the seashore. There he saw the waves cast up an enormous pike on the beach, who lay there gasping for breath.

"You poor, unfortunate fish," said the little fellow, "I'll help you," and he took him and threw him far out into the water. Then the pike at once thrust his head out of the water, and cried: "I thank you. If you are ever in difficulties and I can help you, call me and I will come."

The young fellow went on and soon saw a raven and a swarm of bees who were fighting, and both

sides having a hard time of it. So he went to them and told them how foolish they were to quarrel with each other, since each could fly in whichever direction they wished. That appeared sensible to them, and the raven and the swarm of bees, as they flew away from each other, both called after him: "We thank you for your good advice. And if you are ever in difficulties, and we can help you, call on us and we will come."

The young fellow went on and came to the sentry. "What do you want, my son?" asked the sentry. "I have apples of health in my basket, and would like to enter the castle and cure the princess."

Yes, that was all very fine, but first they would take a peep into the basket supposed to contain the apples, for they had already seen all sorts of curious things that day. But the basket was really full of beautiful apples, and when the young fellow gave the sentry a couple of apples to sample, he felt so bright and chipper that the boy was at once taken to the king, and by the king to the princess. He gave her a few apples, and when she had eaten the first she was able to raise her head from the pillow, and when she had eaten the second she was able to sit up in bed, and when she had eaten the third, she jumped up and danced about the room.

The king's heart was filled with joy, and he said that now she must marry the little fellow. But that

did not suit the princess. He would be a very trifling husband for her, was her opinion. So she told her father that any man who wished to marry her, ought to have made a name for himself; and if she was to take the little fellow, he ought to bring her, first of all, the ring that the king had dropped in the sea twenty-four years before.

The king told the young fellow what she had said, and the latter looked serious; but then he remembered the pike, ran down to the sea-shore, and told him of his trouble. The pike at once dived beneath the waves, and soon returned with the ring, with which the lad went back to the castle with a light heart.

The king received the ring with great surprise, went to his daughter and said: "You know what was promised the man who should cure you, so now let there be no more talk, but marry him." The princess, however, said that would not do, she must have a husband who could provide her with a castle as large and splendid as the one in which she was living, and it must be built of wax, and shine like clear gold.

The king went back to the lad and told him what was demanded, and at first his face fell. But then he remembered the bees, and he ran out and told them his trouble. So they promised to do what they could for him. And on the following morning,

when the people awoke, there stood a castle of wax, as large and splendid as the royal castle itself, and gleaming like clear gold.

Then the king went to the princess and said: "Now I can grant you no more time; now you must take him. You can see that he knows more than most people." The princess had been much surprised at what she had seen; but still she was not satisfied. She insisted that the lad bring her the three oldest brands in hell. If he could only bring her those she would ask nothing further, but would gladly marry him.

The king was angry, yet he gave in to his daughter, and told the lad what she demanded. At first he felt very sad; but suddenly he remembered the raven, the devil's apostle, whom he had once helped, and he called him and told him his trouble. The raven promised to do what he could, and soon returned with the three brands. The lad took them, ran as fast as he could to the castle, and threw them into the princess's lap. They at once flamed up and she was well-nigh choked by the fire and smoke.

So she jumped up, very much frightened, and ran to the lad; for now she had no further objections to becoming his wife. And then they were married and he received half the kingdom as her dower.

NOTE

"The Tree of Health" (Grundtvig, II, No. 4, p. 20), from Seeland, tells a tale of magic fruit, and how it raises a poor boy to high honors with the aid of grateful animals.

XIII

PETER REDHAT

THERE was once a princess, yonder in England, who was so beautiful that none might compare to her, and she actually had it printed in the papers; but at the same time she was so haughty that she scarcely recognized herself. The king, here in Denmark, had a son, who also had a good opinion of himself, and it occurred to him to set forth and sue for the princess' hand. So he took ship and set sail with a great retinue. When he reached London, he went to the castle and told the king of his intentions. The king said he had no objection, save that the princess must have a free hand in the matter, and so they called her. But when the prince made his proposal, she threw back her head, and said she no more wished to have any dealings with him than with her father's blacking-brush or blacking. And with that he was at liberty to march off.

Now he decided that he would play a trick on her in payment for her answer. So he went back to his ship, and had his things brought ashore and placed in a room which he had hired, and instructed his

people to sail home and tell his father he would not be back for the present.

Then he told his servant to go to town, find the shabbiest vagabond to be met with, and change clothes with him. The servant went up and down the streets, and there saw many a poor devil; but it was his task to find the most wretched-looking of all. At last he heard voices in a cellar and went down. There sat a fellow called Peter Redhat, and he was the raggedest the servant had seen thus far. The servant asked whether he would change clothes with him. But Peter Redhat grew furious, because he thought the other wished to make a fool of him. Yet he was quite in earnest, and so the change was made. Peter had an enormously large, broad-brimmed hat, known throughout the city; and this the servant obtained as well. Back he went to the prince with these clothes, and all was satisfactory.

In the meantime the prince had visited a goldsmith, and had ordered a golden distaff, a golden spindle, and a golden yarn-reel, and when they were ready he put on Peter Redhat's clothes and went with his golden distaff to the king's garden. There he sat down and began to spin beneath the princess' windows. When she awoke and saw Peter Redhat sitting there, spinning with a golden distaff, she sent down one of her maids to him, with the princess' compliments, to ask whether she could not buy

the distaff from him. Yes, it could be done, but he wished to speak to her himself. She did not much care to do so, yet she had never seen anything quite so handsome as the distaff, and she wanted it so much that she made up her mind to go down to Peter. Then she asked him what he asked for the distaff. All he wanted was permission to sit in her room for a night. The princess was half inclined to be angry, and turned on her heel with the words: "No! Fie, for shame, that such a pig should sit in my room! That cannot be." But that was the only way she could obtain the distaff, said he, for he would not sell it for money. The princess looked at the distaff, and her wish to possess it grew stronger, and the longer she looked the more she wanted it; till she felt that she simply could not go on living without the distaff. So she discussed with her ladies-in-waiting whether the matter might be arranged. They decided that it might, if he were willing to promise to remain seated in one and the same place, and they remained on guard in the room overnight.

So she received the distaff, and at evening Peter Redhat came and sat him down on a chair near a little table. There he sat all night long, and did not move from the spot. In the morning he had to leave, so he went down and took his golden spindle. The princess slept late, and when she awoke she saw

Peter Redhat sitting in the garden, reeling the yarn that he had spun the day before. When the princess saw the spindle she sent down one of her maids, with her compliments, to ask whether she could not buy the spindle from him. Yes, the princess could buy it, but he wished to talk to her himself. So she came down to him, for she wanted the spindle very much, and it seemed to her that it must be joined to the distaff.

"What does it cost?" she asked him. It cost no more than the permission to sit over-night by the side of her bed.

"Fie, for shame! Peter Redhat sitting beside my bed," cried she, "that would never do!" But she could get the spindle no other way. So she went in to her ladies-in-waiting, and asked whether they did not think that he might be allowed to sit beside her bed, if all twelve of them sat there too, and three or four lights were placed on the table, because she had such a desire to obtain the spindle. And they decided that if they put the table, with five lights on it, close to the bed, and then stationed themselves around the table, close to the bed, it might answer. So she got the spindle, and Peter Redhat came that evening and sat down in a chair beside the bed in which she lay. But the princess did not sleep much that night, because Peter Redhat sat there and looked at her the whole night through.

When day dawned he had to leave again, and this time he went home and took the golden bobbin, for now he had to wind the yarn that he had reeled the day before. The princess slept somewhat late; but when she awoke and came to the window, there sat Peter Redhat, diligently winding yarn. She at once fell in love with the bobbin, for she had never yet seen one so beautiful, and if she could obtain it she would have the complete spinning-set. She sent down one of her ladies, with her compliments, to ask whether she could not buy the bobbin. Yes, surely she could buy the bobbin, but he himself wished to talk to her. So she had to come down to Peter for the third time.

"What does the bobbin cost?" she asked him. No more than permission to lie at the foot of the princess' bed that night.

Fie, for shame, that Peter Redhat should lie at the foot of her bed! That could never be! And she grew angry. But there was no other way of getting the bobbin, and so she consulted her ladies-in-waiting about it. They thought that if she placed twelve chairs along the sides of the bed, and one of them were to sit on each chair with a lighted candle, it might be done, for, of course, they knew what the princess wanted. The princess received the bobbin and at evening, when she had gone to bed, Peter Redhat came. She lay as close as she could to the

wall, and he was ordered to lie as closely as he could against the foot of the bed. Then he began to undress, and he flung one garment here and another there, and his big red hat he threw in front of the door. Then he lay down and at once began to snore, so that the walls shook.

Now the ladies-in-waiting had been on guard for two nights in succession and, one after another, they fell asleep, and the candles fell from their hands, and went out and at last there was only a single light left burning—all the other ladies were sleeping. Then the princess said that since he was sleeping so very soundly, the light might be put out, if only the ladies would be ready to come should she call them. But the ladies were not called, and all of them slept so very late, right into the next forenoon, that the king himself came to wake his daughter. But when he opened the door he could not get in, because of Peter's hat, which he first had to shove aside. The king recognized the hat at once, and became furiously angry. Peter Redhat had to get up, into his clothes and be off as soon as possible; and then came his daughter's turn. She was banished from the country and had to leave that very day So she had to make the best of it and see that she got away. Some money was given her, but it was far too little, since she now had to look out for herself, and was not used to traveling alone.

When she drove off, Peter Redhat sat up behind, and when she stopped at an inn to remain overnight, Peter Redhat stopped there too. She saw to it that she had the best of everything, but Peter Redhat lived as simply as possible.

On the following day she drove on, and so it went for several days; while Peter always saw to it that he kept pace with her. In the course of time the princess' money came to an end, and she had to go a-foot. Peter took a couple of good sandwiches with him and when the princess started out, he started out at the same time. He passed her and said good-day, but she did not answer him, and would not even glance at the side of the road on which he walked. In the evening they reached an inn, and she was given the best room, while Peter had to be satisfied with one less than second-best. On the following day he passed her again, and when he said good-day to her, she was at last able to look around and thank him. Then he asked her whether she would not like to have a sandwich. Yes, she would, for her money was going fast; soon she would be unable to pay for a night's lodging. Then Peter said he would pay for her. They came to an inn and left it again the following morning. Then he told her that he could not keep on paying her way because his money was also coming to an end. They came to a river and had to cross, and Peter paid for

both. When they had crossed, it was evening, and again they had to look for a place where they might spend the night. They were in the prince's own country by this time, and they came to a forest close to his father's castle. Now the princess had to thank God that she had Peter Redhat; for there was no one else upon whom she could lean, and they found a tiny hut in the woods, where they stayed.

"What shall we do now? We have not a single shilling left?" She did not know what to suggest. "Then there is nothing left for us to do," said he, "but wander about and beg; for, of course, we cannot steal."

So they agreed to meet at the hut once or twice a day. She made a little bag to hold meal, and grits and bread-crusts, and then they separated and each went his way for the day.

Of course the prince went home to the castle, and brought back a large purse of gold in his pocket; but she wandered about and gathered such scraps as the people gave her, and in the evening they met in the hut. He asked her what she had taken in, and she showed him: a few pieces of bread, a little meal and grits, and a few bits of meat.

"Oh," said he, "you do not bring back much when you go a-begging! Just see what I have!" And he drew the big purse with all the money in it from

his pocket, and said that it was what he had collected that day.

"But it would be best for us to take service somewhere."

Yes, she was willing, was her answer.

"Well, what work can you do?" he asked her.

She would prefer to find a place as a seamstress.

He did not know whether she could manage to get a place as a seamstress, but he did know where they would take her in to wash dishes. The fact was that the following day there was to be a great banquet at court, because the prince had returned and, to judge by what the people said, there would be a wedding.

Then he made her believe that he had found employment at the castle as a wood-chopper, and so he would be able to have her out in the kitchen. "But could you not arrange to bring me a pot of soup at dinner-time from what is left on the table?"

"Yes, but how am I to manage to carry it to you without attracting attention?" said she.

"You can tie a cord around your waist, under your apron, and hang the pot on it."

She thought she could manage this, and he told her which way to go in order to meet him.

In the morning she went up to the castle and began her work. They gave her a pair of old kettles to scour, and she nearly scoured them to pieces;

but the prince had told the cook in advance that a girl would put in an appearance at a certain time, and that he was to give her plenty to do, but she was not to be otherwise molested, and they were not to push, beat or handle her ungently. When the court had eaten dinner, the kitchen-maid asked permission to go to town for a while; and filling a little pot with soup and meat, she tied it under her apron, and started out to find Peter Redhat. She had to pass several doors at which guards were standing, who invited her to come in and dance with them; for on that day whoever wished to was allowed to enter the great hall and dance. But she excused herself, saying that she had no time to spare. At last she saw the door through which Peter had told her to pass, and there some one seized her, and dragged her into the hall where the banquet was in progress. The prince came up at once, and led her out to dance, and she had to yield, willy-nilly. But she did not recognize him, for he was wearing his princely clothes. The music began, and the prince danced with her so lustily that the dumplings and scraps fairly rolled all around the floor. Every one wanted to know whose they were, because a number of others were also dancing. But she at once admitted that she was guilty. She had a sweetheart, she said, who was employed in the castle, and she had been on her way to him with a

little pot of soup. Then the king asked her which way she had been told to take. Her sweetheart had told her she should pass through the door at the right-hand side of the castle gate. Then the king asked her again whether she would recognize the man again if she saw him. Indeed she would recognize him, for they had traveled many miles together.

"Then pick him out," said the king, "for here are all the people who are employed in the castle." No, he was not among them, said she. But the king kept on talking to her, and meanwhile the prince stole out of the room, put on the old clothes he had worn while they had been together, went outside and walked past the window at which she stood. Then she pointed him out and said: "That is my sweetheart walking there." Thereupon he came in to them, and the king himself could hardly recognize him as he now appeared. He said to the princess: "Do you not think it might have been better for you had you taken the king's son out of Denmark, of whom you made so much fun?"

"Ah, do not speak of it," said she, "I have trouble enough as it is."

"Yes, but if he is still willing to take you, do you think he would be good enough for you?"

"It would be wonderful, no doubt, but that opportunity will never recur."

"And yet it might," said he, "if you promise me that you will never again be ruled by arrogance and haughtiness."

Then he told his father and guests that this was the princess for whose sake he had traveled to England; and that he had played a trick upon her because she had been so arrogant when he had sought her out the first time, and had not been willing to so much as look at him. But now he was convinced that she had changed, and that the time had come when she should know who he really was, and be raised from her low estate. So they brought her garments, and he laid aside Peter Redhat's rags, and the wedding was held at once. Since he was the crown-prince of the land, he became king after his father's death and she, as was no more than right, became queen. But her parents always held a grudge against him because he had humiliated her.

NOTE

"Peter Redhat" (Kristensen, V, No. 13, p. 69), from Jutland, is an original variant of the story of the artful "King Bluebeard," a favorite in all Northern lands, who disguised as a vagabond, is successful in taming the arrogant princess.

XIV

STRONG JACK

ONCE upon a time there was a man whose wife presented him with a son, and since he had heard that children who are weaned late grow to be exceptionally strong, he did not allow his son to be weaned for full ten years. When the ten years were up, he took him to the woods to see how strong he had become. There he told him to take hold of a tree and said: "Now, Jack, see whether you can pull it up!" The boy gave the tree a good tug, so that it trembled from top to bottom, but still he could not pull it up. Then his father went back home with him, and Jack was not weaned for full ten years more.

When the second ten years were up, his father took him out into the woods again, and now he could pull up the tree with ease. Then his father thought that now his son was strong enough to help him at work. But no one was willing to stay on the farm when they saw how strong Jack was. When he mowed corn he tossed it so far from him that it was impossible to gather it up again, and so it went with everything else he did.

At last his father said to Jack one day: "Stop! We cannot go on in this way. I cannot keep you here at home; you will have to go out into the world, and take service where there is more room, and where people have more to break and to eat than we have here."

So Jack wandered out into the world to look for work, and came to a place where he heard that the pastor's farm-hand had just left, and where he could probably find employment, though the pastor was a terrible miser. Jack paid no attention to this; but went to the pastor and asked him whether he would engage a man as a farm-hand. The only wages he asked at the end of the year was the right to give the pastor three good cracks over the back. As soon as the pastor understood that he did not have to pay him any money, he at once agreed to this condition.

The first day Jack had taken service, he was told to bring water and fire-wood to the kitchen. But the pails seemed too small for him; he could do nothing with them, he said; so he found two enormous soup-kettles and fetched water in those, and brought in a whole cord of fire-wood at once. When the cook saw this she was much frightened, ran to the pastor, said the farm-hand he had engaged was a strange fellow, and told her master what he had done. Then the pastor's heart leaped

to his mouth at the thought of the wages he had agreed to pay, and he said: "Wait a bit, I'll send him to the devil's wood. He is not likely to come back, and then we'll be rid of him." And he went out and said to Jack: "You must drive out to the forest to-morrow and fetch fire-wood."

"Very well, master," said Jack, and the next morning he hitched up early and drove to the wood. When he arrived he first cut down a tree, split it up, and then loaded it on a wagon. But he was no more than half-through before every corner of the wood was swarming with devils, who began to attack him. But Jack knew how to help himself. Beside him stood an enormous tree with a mighty crown. He pulled it up by the roots, turned it upside-down, and using it as a broom, he swept every last devil away.

When he had finished his work, he loaded the big tree on his wagon. But now the load was so heavy that the horses could not move the wagon from the spot, so he unhitched them, loaded them on the wagon as well, and drew it home himself. If the pastor had not been alarmed before, he was alarmed now, when he saw Jack coming back in such style. He had to think of another way out, so he told Jack he had made a contract with the devil, and that Jack must fetch it out of hell. If he did so, he would give him a wagon-load of money. For he thought

to himself: "If he is once in hell, it is not likely that he will get out again."

Jack did as he was told, went to hell, and insisted that the devil give him the pastor's contract. Then the devil dragged up an iron ring and said to Jack: "Now we'll see which of us can throw this iron ring the highest. If you throw it higher than I do, then I'll give you the contract; but if I throw it higher than you do, then I'll keep the contract, and you will have to stay here as well." So the devil threw the ring up into the air first, and it flew a long time; but at last it came down again. Now it was Jack's turn; but Jack was well aware that he was not strong enough to cope with the devil. He did not betray his thoughts, however, took the ring in both hands and spread his legs as though he really intended throwing it into the air. But suddenly he stopped and turned it around as though he were thinking of something.

"What is on your mind?" asked the devil.

"Why," said Jack, "I was only thinking, suppose I do throw the ring high, up to the very Ancient of Days—you know who He is—sitting up above; why then, of course, you would never see your ring again."

"No, no, you must not do that!" said the devil, "I would rather give you the contract." So Jack took the contract and went back to the miserly pas-

tor, who was frightened when he saw Jack once more. But whether he liked it or not, he now had to give Jack a wagon-load of money, and Jack drove away with it.

On his way he came to a smithy, stopped and asked the smith whether he could make him a cane.

"No," said the smith, "that is not in my line of work, for I'd have you know that I do not trouble with odds and ends."

"You'll not need to do so in this case," answered Jack, "for the cane that I want must weigh four hundred pounds, three hundred for the shaft, and a hundred for the handle."

"I've never had that much iron in all my life," said the smith.

"Oh, well," said Jack, and he took a handful of money from the wagon and offered it to the smith, "here is money to buy the iron. I'll be back in eight days to get my cane."

Then he drove home to his father, who was very glad to see him again, and shed no tears over all the money he brought along. Jack gave it all to him, for he cared nothing for it himself. His father would have been pleased to have had Jack stay at home with him and enjoy himself, but this Jack did not want to do. When the eight days were up, he said farewell to his father, called at the smithy for

his cane, and again wandered out into the wide world. After he had wandered for awhile, he came to a bridge and there stood a man breaking stone. With every blow he smashed a rock as large as a mill-stone.

"That fellow is not half-bad," thought Jack, and he went over to the man and asked him: "Why do you stand here breaking rock?"

"Well," said the man, "one has to make a living some one way or another."

"There's not much pleasure making it that way," said Jack, "you will do better if you come along with me."

The stone-breaker had no objection, for he had neither wife nor children, and so he joined Jack. After they had wandered on for a while they came to a forest. There stood a man chopping wood, and with each blow he split an enormous block.

"That fellow is not half-bad either," thought Jack, went over to the man, and asked him why he stood there splitting wood.

"Well, one has to have something to do," said the wood-chopper.

"Yes, but it is hard work," answered Jack, "you can find something better to do if you come along with me."

So he went along with him. After they had wandered for quite a time they reached a dense forest,

and in the middle of the forest they came upon a handsome castle.

"That suits me very well," said Jack, "let us go in." So they went in, and passed through one handsome room after another, but without finding a single human being. At last they came to a room in which hung a number of beautiful muskets and other weapons.

"Let us each take a musket," said Jack, "and go out and shoot some game. Then we can have a meal, for it looks as though we would have to provide our own meals." Each took a musket, and went hunting, and after they had secured a quantity of game, they agreed that the wood-chopper should stay at home and prepare the meal; while his two companions went after more game. So the wood-chopper stayed at home, cooked the soup, roasted the meat, and prepared everything against the return of the others.

Suddenly an old woman came in through the door, and when she saw the food she said to the wood-chopper: "Oh, give me a little something to eat, too!"

"Why, certainly," said the wood-chopper, and he ladled out soup for her, and gave her some of the roast, and she ate. But when she had eaten, she drew forth a cudgel and began to beat the wood-chopper lustily. At first he struck back at her; but

she was the stronger, and beat him until he lay on the ground and could not move. Then she opened a trap-door in the floor, threw the wood-chopper down, and closed it again. When the others came back there was the dinner all prepared; but the wood-chopper was nowhere to be found. So they decided that he had grown weary of adventure and had run away, ate and then went to bed.

On the following day the stone-breaker was to stay at home and cook, while Jack went abroad. In brief, he had the same experience as his companion, and when Jack came home, there was dinner all prepared, and some of it already had been eaten, but there was no stone-breaker.

"They are a fine brace of comrades!" said Jack.

The following day he had to get his dinner and cook it as well. When he had finished, the old woman came and asked for a bit to eat. He had no objection, he said, and they sat down at the table together and ate; but when they were through, the old woman at once pulled out her cudgel and began to thrash Jack lustily. Jack was not lazy either; he seized his cane and began to thrash her. He noticed that each of her blows raised a lump; and that while each of his raised a lump as well, she had a box of salve hidden beneath her apron, and when she rubbed it on her bruises they at once disappeared. Jack saw that under these circumstances he was

bound to be the loser in the end. So he closed in on her, tore the box from her, and after he had given her a few more cracks with his cane, she had come to the end of her tether and had to beg for mercy. Then Jack told her he would not stop thrashing her until she told him what she had done with his two comrades. She had to tell the truth, and show him the trap-door. He lifted it and drew them both out, alive, though badly beaten. But he took the salve and rubbed them with it, and they were cured at once.

In the meanwhile the witch had disappeared. When his comrades had recovered their spirits somewhat after their fright, Jack said: "After all, it might be worth our while to examine the castle a little more closely, for there may be more in it than we suspect." So they went from one room to another, and at length came to a place where there was a deep hole in the ground, like an abyss. "We must find out what this is!" said Jack. So they took a long rope and tied a basket to it, and agreed that first the wood-chopper and then the stone-breaker should be let down, and should then come up and let Jack know what there was below. And when they got down and had looked around a bit, they came to a door. This they opened and found a room in which sat two beautiful princesses. When they saw the strangers they cried out to them to

beware, that the witch had gone out for a moment; but that when she returned they would have a hard time of it. Then they were frightened, ran back to the basket, and gave Jack the signal to pull them up again. When they got up they told Jack what they had seen.

"I must go down," said Jack; and had them let him down by the rope. Then he went to the door and opened it. In the meantime the witch had come home, but this did not trouble Jack. He thrashed her until she allowed him to take the two princesses along with him. So they went to the basket, and first the one princess was drawn up, and then the other. But once they had been drawn up, the wood-chopper and the stone-cutter decided to leave Jack down below. For if he came up, thought they, he would want one of the princesses, and one of them would have to go short. So they let down the basket, and when they had pulled it up half-way, and noticed how heavy it was, concluding Jack was probably in it, they cut the rope and let it fall. But they had made a mistake, after all, for Jack had only laid his cane in the basket, and it fell down and lay at his feet. As he now realized how matters stood, and that he could not get up again, he turned around and set forth on new voyages of discovery.

Soon he came to a gate heavily barred with iron,

behind which sat a third princess combing the hair of a troll with seven heads. The troll was asleep, but Jack beat on the iron gate with such power that it burst open, and the troll awoke. But Jack was not idle: he pounced on him, and struck off all seven of his heads at a single blow. Then he took the princess's hand, told her to follow him, and both went back to the witch, whom Jack thrashed until she promised to bring the princess and himself to the surface of the earth once more. The princess now wished to return to her parents, and the witch had to attend to that; but Jack would not go with her. Before they parted the princess gave Jack two gold pieces, one shaped like a half-sun, the other like a half-moon.

Then Jack wandered out into the world again, and after he had traveled for a while he came to a city whose king had offered a great reward for the man who could make a half-sun and a half-moon. So Jack went to an old goldsmith, and said he was a journeyman goldsmith, and could easily make a half-sun and a half-moon. The goldsmith need only go to the king and tell him he would undertake the job, and that the two should be ready in three days' time. The old goldsmith did so, and then wanted Jack to begin work; but he would not bother with work; he ran about, killed time, and came home in the evening singing. The old goldsmith told his

wife all about it, and felt very badly; for he was convinced that Jack was a swindler who wanted to take advantage of him. But on the last morning he suddenly heard such a rumbling and thundering in the smithy that his hair stood on end.

"Well, it seems as though he is beginning to work after all," said the goldsmith. "I must go down and see how he gets along." And when he came to the smithy, there stood Jack beating the smithy floor with his cane till the sparks flew, and the whole smithy seemed to be aflame.

"What are you doing there?" asked the goldsmith, horrified.

"I have finished now," said Jack. "Do you want to take up the half-sun and the half-moon to the castle?"

"No, thank you," said the smith, "I have worried enough about the whole affair; you had better take them there yourself."

"Well, that can be done," said Jack, and went up to the castle.

When he said that he had come with the half-sun and the half-moon, he was led straightway before the king, who sat with the queen at table, together with the three princesses who had been in the troll's castle. But the very first persons Jack saw when he stepped into the room were his good friends, the wood-chopper and the rock-breaker, who were also

seated at the table, and had become great lords and married the two princesses. Jack now showed the two gold-pieces which the princess had given him. And when the third princess, the loveliest of all, saw them she at once recognized her deliverer, told the king and queen the whole story, and said she would marry no one else. So Jack obtained the princess, and they had a big wedding, and every one in the castle had a jolly time. Jack and his princess stayed at the castle, and perhaps they are living there this very day.

NOTE

"Strong Jack" (Grundtvig, I, No. 34, p. 33), from Seeland, is a favorite among all Teutonic peoples. It expresses their pleasure in superhuman corporal achievement, and is not devoid of mystery, since Jack's subterranean adventures probably originated in a journey to the under-world, such as was formerly ascribed by preference to gods and heroes. (Comp. Panzer, *Studien zur germanischen Sagengeschichte*, I, Munich, 1910, p. 44; v.d. Leyen *Das Märchen in den Göttersagen der Edda*, Berlin, 1899, p. 45.)

XV

THE PRINCESS WITH THE TWELVE PAIR OF GOLDEN SHOES

THERE was once a young man who had wandered out into the world to seek his fortune. As he went his way he met an old man who asked him for alms. The lad told him that he had no money; but that he would gladly share with him what food he had, and this the old man gratefully accepted. They seated themselves beneath a tree, and the young man divided the food into two equal parts. When they had eaten he rose to go on his way; but the old man said: "You shared what you had with me, and in return I will give you this stick and this ball, for they will make your fortune. If you raise the stick in the air in front of you, you will become invisible; and if you strike the ball with the stick, it will roll in front of you, and show you the road you should take."

The young man thanked him for his gifts, cast the ball to the ground and struck it with the stick. The ball rolled swiftly in advance of him, and kept on rolling, until they came to a large city. Here he saw that the chopped-off heads of human

beings had been planted all around the city walls. He asked the first person whom he met why this was, and learned that the whole country grieved because of the princess, who wore out twelve pair of golden shoes every night without any one knowing how she did so. The old king was weary of it, and had vowed whoever could solve the mystery should receive the princess and half the kingdom beside; but whoever tried and could not solve it would have to lose his life. Now many princes and great lords had come and made the attempt, because the princess was surpassingly lovely; but all of them had had to yield their lives, and the old king was in deep sorrow because of it.

When the young man heard of this he had a great mind to undertake the adventure. He at once went to the castle and said he would make the attempt the following night. When the old king saw him, he felt sorry for him, and he advised him to give up the undertaking, since he was certain to have no better luck than his predecessors. But he held to his resolve, and the king said that he should sleep for three nights in the princess' room, and see whether he could discover anything; and if he had not discovered anything by the third day, he would have to take his way to the scaffold.

The young man was satisfied to have it so, and in the evening he was led into the princess' room,

where a bed had been prepared for him. He leaned his stick against the bed, hung his knapsack on it, and lay down resolved not to close an eye the whole night. He stayed awake for a long time and did not notice anything; but suddenly he fell asleep, and when he woke up it was bright daylight. Then he was very angry with himself, and resolved firmly that he would keep a better watch the following night.

But the next night passed just as the first had, and now the young man had but a single night left.

When he lay down the third night, he pretended to fall asleep at once; and before long he heard a voice asking the princess whether he were sleeping. The princess answered, "Yes," and thereupon a maiden clad in white came to his bed and said: "I will test him, at any rate, to see whether he is really asleep," and she took a golden needle and thrust it into his heel. But he did not move, and she went away and left the needle behind her. Then he saw her, together with the princess, move aside the latter's bed, so that a flight of stairs came to view, and they went down the flight of stairs. He rose quickly, took the needle and put it in his knapsack on his back, and held his stick before him so that he was invisible. Then he followed them down the stairs, and they went on until they reached a forest that was all of silver—trees, flowers and grass.

When they came to the end of the silver forest, he broke a branch from a tree, and put it in his knapsack. The princess heard the trees rustle and turned around; but she could see no one. "Oh, that is only the wind!" said the maiden with her.

Then they came to another forest, where all was of gold—trees, flowers and grass; and when they reached the end of the golden forest, he broke a branch and put it in his knapsack. The princess turned around, and said it seemed as though some one were behind them; but the girl replied again that it was only the wind.

Then they came to a forest whose trees, flowers and grass were all of diamond, and when they reached the end of the diamond forest, he broke a branch from a tree and put it in his knapsack. Finally they reached a lake, and there lay a little boat, and the princess and the girl got in. But as they were about to push off, he leaped into the boat, and it rocked so strongly that the princess grew afraid, and cried out that now surely some one was behind them. But the girl replied it was only the wind.

They crossed to the opposite shore, and there lay a great castle. An ugly troll came up, received the princess, led her in and asked her why she was so late. Then she told him she had suffered a great fright, and that some one had followed them, though

she had seen no one. Then they seated themselves at the table, and the young man stood behind the princess' chair. When she had eaten he took away her golden plate, her golden knife and her golden fork, and put them all in his knapsack. The troll and the princess could not imagine what had become of them; but the troll wasted no more thought on them, for now he wanted to dance. So they began to dance, and the princess danced twelve times with the troll, and each time she danced with him she completely wore out a pair of golden shoes. But when she had danced the last dance and thrown the shoes in the corner, the young man picked them up, and put them in his knapsack. When the dancing was over the troll led her back to the boat, and the young man crossed with them, and was the first to jump ashore and run home swiftly, so that he got there before they did, and could lie down in bed and pretend to be asleep when the princess arrived.

In the morning the old king came, and asked whether he had discovered anything; but he said he had fallen asleep, as he had the two nights preceding, and had not noticed anything. This made the old king very sad; but the princess was all the happier, and wished to see him beheaded herself. So the young man was led to the scaffold, and the king and the princess and the whole court went along.

And as he stood on the scaffold, he begged permission of the king to tell him a wonderful dream he had dreamt during the night just passed, and the king granted his request. So he told how he had dreamed that a girl clad in white had come to the princess and asked her whether he was asleep; and in order to make certain, the girl in white had thrust a golden needle into his heel. "And I think this is the very needle," he said and drew it forth from his knapsack. "And then I dreamed that they pushed the princess' bed aside, and went down a flight of steps, hidden beneath the bed, and I went after them; and then I dreamed that we came to a forest where the trees, flowers and grass were all of silver, and I broke a branch from one of the trees. Here it is. Then we came to a forest where the trees, flowers and grass were of gold, and I broke a branch from one of those trees. Here it is. Then I dreamed we came to a forest where the trees, flowers and grass were of diamond, and I broke a branch from one of those trees. Here it is. Then I dreamed that we went on and came to a lake, where lay a boat, and the princess and the girl got into the boat. But when I leaped in the princess was frightened, and said that there was some one behind her, though she could not see me. We crossed the lake to a great castle, and there an ugly troll received the princess and led her into the castle, and

sat down to dine with her; and I dreamed that I stood behind her chair, and that after she had eaten, I took her plate, her knife and her fork and put them in my knapsack. Here they are. And then I dreamed that the troll asked the princess to dance with him, and that she danced twelve times, and each time she danced she wore out a pair of golden shoes. But when she had danced the last dance, and flung the shoes aside, I picked them up, put them in my knapsack, and here they are. Then I dreamed the princess came home again; but I reached the castle before she did, and lay down in bed before she arrived."

When the old king had heard all this his happiness was beyond bounds; but the princess was half-dead with fright, and could not imagine how it had all happened. The king now wished the young man to marry the princess; but he decided to pay the troll a visit first, and asked the princess to lend him her golden thimble. She gave it to him, and the young man descended the stairs, passed through the silver forest, the golden forest and the diamond forest by the lake, and rowed across to the troll's castle. When he found the troll he thrust him through the heart with the golden needle that he had drawn from his heel, and held the princess' thimble beneath it. Three drops of blood fell into it, and the troll died.

Then he rowed back, and when he came to the diamond forest, he let one drop of blood fall to the ground, and at once all the trees, flowers and grasses turned into as many men, women and children, who were so happy to be released from their enchantment they begged him to be their king, for they were a whole nation. They followed him to the golden forest, and there he let another drop of blood fall to the ground; and there, too, all the trees, flowers and grasses turned into human beings, enough to people a kingdom. They went with him to the silver forest, and here he let the third drop of blood fall to the ground and all the trees, flowers and grasses likewise became human beings, praised him as their deliverer, and wished to make him their king. They went with him to the old king and told him of their deliverance, and he and the princess were also happy, now that she, too, had been released from her enchantment. Then the wedding was celebrated with great splendor, and he became king over all three kingdoms.

NOTE

"The Princess With the Twelve Pair of Golden Shoes" (Grundtvig, III, No. 3, p. 11), from Bornholm, is also to be found in a variant form in Russia.

"HE AT ONCE PUT IT ON AND SAW AN INNUMERABLE NUMBER OF TROLLS HURRYING TOWARD THE VILLAGE."

—*Page 143*

XVI

THE MAGIC HAT

ONE day a shepherd boy was sitting on a hill. It was the very day that they were celebrating a big feast in the neighboring village; and when the bells rang at noon—as was always the custom in the old days—he heard a great tumult and noise inside the hill upon which he was sitting, and the same question asked, over and over again: "Where is my hat? Where is my hat?" That seemed strange to him, and suddenly it occurred to him to call out himself: "Have you no hat for me?"

"No," said one voice.

"Yes, we have," said another, "here is father's old hat!"

And an old, worn-out hat popped up out of the hill for the shepherd boy. He at once put it on and saw an innumerable number of trolls hurrying toward the village, and went home himself, in order to get his dinner. But he could not understand how it happened that all the people whom he met passed close by him or nearly stepped on him; and when he spoke to any one they turned about in surprise, and did not answer him. At last he thought of the hat,

and began to suspect that it might be due to the hat that people did not see him.

No more had this passed through his mind, than it occurred to him how pleasant it would be to see what was going on in the house where the feast was being given. So there he went, and was able to walk freely about among the guests, and see everything without being seen or noticed by anybody himself. And when the guests sat down to dinner, he could see an enormous number of trolls sitting among them, and helping themselves liberally to all the dishes, so that the people were entirely unable to understand what became of all the food that was brought on the table, and that seemed to disappear beneath their very hands. The shepherd boy hung about where there was something to get, and made a fine meal of everything among the eatables. And when he had not a bit of room left in which to stow away any more, it occurred to him that a good bite to eat would not harm his old mother at home. So he loaded himself with cake, roast, wine and other good things, and carried them home to her. Of course she was pleased when she saw all the good things; and, like her boy, she thought it would be pleasant to have more good things to eat the following day. So the boy saw to it that he carried home the best of all he could manage to lay hand on; and wherever he dipped in there was soon a

hole in the dish, and whoever gave a feast was soon at the end of his resources. But that never worried our shepherd boy, who attended strictly to his own affairs.

At last, toward evening, the dance was about to begin. The boy, who had just gathered up another good armful of provisions, felt like looking on, and went up with the rest to the upper story. Here he had to squeeze into a corner, as well as he could, and look to it that no one stepped on him. Finally, he stood in front of the others, because he dared not trust himself in the closely-pressed crowd. There he stood and looked on, and was enjoying himself hugely; but just as the bride danced past him, her coat was spinning merrily around, and it knocked the hat from his head, and as soon as the hat was off, his invisibility had come to an end. There he stood, loaded down with all sorts of eatables; and when the people had recovered from their astonishment, he had to explain everything in detail. When he had done that, he had to take a good thrashing and resign himself to bringing back all the food he had stolen. So with the exception of the good dinner that he had already put away, he had no further profit for all his pains. As to the hat, it was never seen again.

NOTE

"The Magic Hat" (Grundtvig, II, No. 428, p. 268), from Mön, is a folk-tale, dealing in humorous form with the nature of an article which often appears in more extended fairy-tales as one of three greatly desired magic belongings, and which is known in legend as the tarn-cap, or magic cap.

XVII

LITTLE MAY

ONCE upon a time there was a little girl who herded sheep, and her name was May. Now the Prince of England decided, one day, that he would set forth and hunt up a wife for himself, and he passed by little May, as she was sitting by the edge of the road, herding her sheep. So he greeted her and said: "Good-day, little May, and how are you?"

"I am very well, for though I wear rags upon rags until I marry the king of England's son, then I shall wear gold upon gold."

"That will never happen, little May."

"Yes, indeed, it will happen."

So the prince traveled on to woo a bride, and he was not refused; but it was agreed that the bride should first visit him in order to see whom she was marrying. And when the foreign princess came, her way led her past little May, who was herding her sheep, and she greeted her and said: "How is the prince of England?"

"He is very well, but he has a stone set in the

threshold of his door that tells everything one has ever done."

So the bride journeyed on. And when she came to the prince and trod on the stone, the stone said:

"There's no truth in what she said
For she already has been wed!"

When the prince heard that, he would hear no more of the princess, since he wished to marry a maid and not a widow, and the princess had to return whence she came.

Again the prince set forth to hunt up a bride, and once more his way led him past little May. He greeted her and said:

"Good-day, little May. And how are you today?"

"I am very well, for though I wear rags upon rags until I marry the king of England's son, when I marry him I shall wear gold upon gold."

"That will never happen, little May."

"Yes, indeed, it will happen."

Then he journeyed on, and again his suit was successful. The foreign princess was willing to marry him, and it was agreed that she should go and visit him; for he always made this a condition.

Now on her way to the prince she passed little May. So she asked after the English prince, and

May answered: "He is well, but he has a stone set in the threshold of his door that tells everything one has ever done."

When she entered the prince's home and trod on the stone, the stone said:

"There's no truth in what she said
Twice already she has wed!"

That would not answer, and of course the prince did not wish to have anything more to do with her. She was welcome to go back whence she came, for the prince had made up his mind to marry a maid and not a widow twice over.

So once more he set forth to hunt for a bride, and as usual, his way led him past little May. He greeted her and said: "How are you, little May?"

"I am very well, for though I wear rags over rags until I marry the king of England's son, when I marry him I shall wear gold over gold."

"That will never happen, little May."

"Yes, indeed, it will happen."

Thereupon the prince went his way, and came to the princess whom he wished to make his bride. His suit was successful, and it was agreed that she should come and visit him, and with this consolation he traveled back home again.

Now when the new bride came to visit him her

way took her past little May, and she asked after the prince of England.

"Yes, he is well, but he has a stone set in the threshold of his door that tells everything one has ever done."

The princess went on, and when she trod on the stone, the stone said:

"There's no truth in what she said
Thrice already she has wed."

This was going from bad to worse, and the princess was at once sent home again.

So once more the prince had to start out on his wanderings; for he had made up his mind to take a wife. On the way he passed little May, who was herding her sheep.

"Good-day, little May, and how are you?"

"I am well, for though I wear rags over rags until I marry the king of England's son, then I shall wear gold over gold."

"That will never happen, little May."

"Yes, indeed, it will happen."

He traveled on and found a fourth princess; sued for her hand and was informed that he might have it. It was agreed that she was to pay him a visit, and then he traveled home again.

When the princess went to visit him, she inquired

how the other three princesses had fared with the prince, and she had no mind to be the fourth one rejected. When she passed little May she first asked her how the king of England's son was.

"Oh, he is well, but he has a stone set in the threshold of his door that tells everything one has ever done."

So the princess asked whether she could not visit the prince in her place. They could change clothes, and she would mind the sheep for her in the meantime.

Little May was quite willing, and was dressed in the princess's clothes, and thus went to visit the prince. When she trod on the stone, the stone said:

"This maid who visits you
Is lovely, pure and true!"

"Well, at last the right one has come," thought the prince. "I have found the maid I have wished for so long." And in order that there might be no mistake, and that he would be sure to recognize her again, he wove a ring in her hair, and allowed her to travel home again for the present; for she was not to return until the wedding.

When little May had been dismissed by the prince, she changed clothes once more, and the princess went back to her people, and was glad that every-

thing had gone so smoothly, for she was as much a widow as the rest.

When the time came for the prince to go to his bride, and celebrate the wedding, he passed little May as usual. He greeted her and said:

"How do you do, little May?"

"I am very well, for though I wear rags over rags until I marry the king of England's son, then I shall wear gold over gold." And as the king's son stood there and looked at her he noticed something gleaming in her hair. His curiosity aroused, he looked more closely to see what it might be, and found his own golden ring, which he had woven into it. Then he knew that she and no one else had visited him, and since he knew that she was a pure and good maiden, and he had already been deceived so many times, he determined to take her straight home with him and marry her. As for her sheep, any one who felt so inclined might look after them. So they were married, and that is how it happened that little May secured the king of England's son after all, and could wear gold over gold.

NOTE

"Little May" (Kristensen, V, No. 7, p. 57), from Jutland, like an old song with a faithfully recurring refrain, tells the story of the little shepherdess who finally secures the king of England's son for a husband.

XVIII

TRILLEVIP

A GIRL of the island of Funen had been to church one Sunday, and on her way home passed through a forest that belonged to a great land-owner's estate. She passed along lost in thought, and had counted up to twenty, when she looked around and noticed the land-owner's son, with his musket over his shoulder, walking directly behind her. Then she blushed, for she felt sure he had heard her talking to herself. True enough, he at once asked her why she talked to herself as she was doing. Then, in her embarrassment she said the first thing that came into her head: "I was only calculating how many spindles of yarn I could spin of an evening."

He went home, and told his mother about the girl to whom he had spoken in the woods, who could spin twenty spindles of yarn in a single evening. She was not like his mother's maids. Then his mother could not send for the girl quickly enough, and was ready to promise her the moon itself to induce her to come to her as a spinning-girl. The girl at once agreed, for she had no idea that the woman knew

of her lightly-uttered words. So she engaged herself, and that very evening the woman brought her yarn for full twenty spindles.

"For I have heard," said she, "that you can spin that number."

The girl span and span, as hard as ever she could, and it grew late. Midnight came and her task was not yet half accomplished. Poor girl, she span and cried as she span, and yet could make no headway. At midnight a little dwarf with a red cap suddenly appeared to her and said: "Why do you sit there and cry? Can I help you?"

"Yes, this is how it is," said she. "I was to have spun all that yarn this evening, and I have not as yet spun half of it. If you could help me it would make me very happy."

"That's easily done," said the dwarf, "but first of all you must promise to be my sweetheart, and later you must marry me."

And in her need the girl promised, not without anxious thought of the future. And one, two, three, all the work was done.

From that time on the little fellow helped her every evening with her spinning. And the woman took such a fancy to her she was no longer treated as a serving-maid; but her mistress decided to marry her to her son, because she was so industrious. That was bad, for she had promised her

hand to the little dwarf, though she was afraid to say anything about it. The wedding preparations were under way; but the nearer came the appointed day, the sadder grew the girl, so that the dwarf could not help but notice that something was not as it should be. She told him how matters stood, and he grumbled a bit, but then informed her that if she could guess his name, he would release her from her promise. And he gave her three days grace, and told her she could have three guesses. She decided to try, although she had no idea at all as to how to go about it. Then it happened by a fortunate chance, that the huntsman of the estate, who had to go hunting every day in anticipation of the wedding, passed a near-by hill late at night. And he saw an innumerable number of lights inside the hill, and the dwarfs were dancing. The merriest of all was a little dwarf with a red cap, who leaped about singing:

"I'm always busy spinning
A maiden fair I'm winning,
And Trillevip's my name!"

In the meantime the spinning-girl had confided her secret betrothal and the embarrassment it caused her to another of the maids, and the other maid had just heard the huntsman tell of his experi-

ence that evening, so she repeated his story to the spinning-girl, word for word. Yet when the dwarf came and asked her to guess, she did not want to undeceive him too soon, so at first she guessed "Peter," and then she guessed "Paul," and the dwarf danced about and shone with happiness like a coin fresh from the mint. But his happiness was of short duration; for when she guessed for the third time she said: "Trillevip's your name."

And that was the end of the dwarf's betrothal. He could not win her now, but he did wish to help her once more, for he well knew that she would need his assistance. Her young master had chosen her because she could spin so well, and he would fall into a rage and disown her, if he learned the truth. So when he left her the dwarf said: "On your wedding day three old women will enter the room when you sit down to dinner. You must call the first one mother, the second one grandmother, and the third one great grandmother. And no matter how horrible they look, nor how vexed your husband may be, you must entertain them as well as you possibly can."

And it happened just as he had said; and the girl did just as he had advised her, though she could see no object in it all. The first to arrive was a horrible old woman with two great red eyes that hung far down on her cheeks. When the young man asked

her how it was that her eyes were so red, she said: "Because I used to sit up night after night spinning."

When she had gone, came the second one, and she also was an ugly old woman, with a mouth that stretched nearly to her ears.

"How is it that you have such a large mouth?" asked the young husband.

"Well, it is because I had to moisten my finger so often when I was spinning, since otherwise the thread would not have been smooth. And I have been spinning so many years, day and night, that it is a wonder my mouth is not larger than it is."

At last there appeared the most horrible old hag of them all; she hobbled along on two crutches, and her legs were so weak that she could neither stand nor walk.

"What is the matter with you, mother?" asked the man. "Why do you drag yourself along so painfully?"

"Well, it is because I have grown so weak from treading, for I have been spinning time out of mind, and I hope that no one will ever have to reap what I have sown, and grow to be as wretched as I am."

And when she had hobbled off the young master said to the spinning-girl, who was now his wife: "From now on you are never to touch a spinning-wheel, since I should not want you to look like your

mother, or your grandmother, or your great-grandmother for anything in the world."

Then she understood what the dwarf had in mind, and was glad she had followed his instructions to the letter.

NOTE

"Trillevip" (Grundtvig, II, No. 309, p. 163), from Fünen, is a clever combination of two fairy-tales, found separately in Grimm's collection. Rumpelstilzchen is the hero of the first of the Grimm stories, and his three spinners are the grotesque personages of the closing act.

XIX

A MOMENT IN HEAVEN

ONCE upon a time there were two young fellows who were the closest of friends, and who had promised one another that, no matter where each of them might be, or how far removed from one another, the one would attend the other's wedding. But one of them died, and years passed before the other married. And as he was sitting at the wedding dinner with his bride, and the meal was well-nigh over, the bridegroom saw his friend who had died enter the room. But none of the others could see him. The bridegroom rose, went to meet him and led him aside.

His friend said: "Here I have come to your wedding, as I promised you I would."

The bridegroom asked him: "Are you happy where you now are?"

And his friend answered: "I am so happy that words cannot describe my happiness. Can you not come with me for a moment, and see for yourself."

"Yes," said the bridegroom, "but now I must dance with my bride."

"You can put it off for a little while," said his friend, "just come along with me."

So they went off together to heaven. And there all was lovely, beyond the power of tongue to tell. The friend went to the bridegroom and said: "Hurry, your bride is waiting for you with sorrow."

The bridegroom replied: "Why, I have only been here a moment!"

And his friend came to him again and said: "Hurry, they are all waiting for you, and grieving for you."

But again he answered: "Why, I have only been here a moment!"

Then his friend came to the bridegroom for the third time and said: "Now you must go."

And he came back to earth in the house where the wedding was held; but it seemed altogether changed to him. He saw no signs of festivity, and heard no music. A feeling of strangeness came over him, and he asked a woman: "Are they not celebrating a wedding in this house to-day?"

"Wedding!" said the woman, "no, there has been no wedding in this house for many, many years. My great grandmother told me, when I was a little girl, that there had been a wedding here once, a hundred years ago; but that the bridegroom had suddenly disappeared just as he was about to dance with the bride, and had never returned."

Then he realized that he had spent a hundred

years in heaven, and that all his earthly friends were dead and gone, and he prayed God to take him back again where he had been. And God granted his prayer.

NOTE

The legendary dream-story of "A Moment in Heaven" (Grundtvig, III, No. 6, p. 19) from Jutland, is widely known.

XX

THE PASTOR'S WIFE

THERE was once a very poor girl who had the good fortune to marry well, for she married a pastor who had a fat living. He was a good man and fond of her, and she was fond of him, and quite contented. But one anxiety haunted her day and night, and that was a great dread lest she have children. There are other women who worry lest they have no children; but this woman was always afraid that children might be her portion. So one day she went to a wise woman, that is to say an evil witch in the village, and asked her whether she could not advise her how she might avoid having any children. Yes, that she could do, said the wise woman, and she gave the pastor's wife seven stones; for that was the number of the children she should have had, said the woman—and all the pastor's wife need do was to throw these stones in the well. Then she would be spared having any children.

The pastor's wife took the stones, paid the wise woman well for her trouble, thanked her, and threw the stones in the well. Then she felt quite lighthearted to think that she need fear no more.

Not long after, the pastor was taking a walk with his wife one clear, moonlit evening, and their way led them past the church-yard. As they walked the pastor suddenly noticed that his wife cast no shadow. His own shadow he could see, it followed him everywhere; but she had none. A great fear came over the pastor, and he asked her how it was that she had no shadow, something every human being had. She must have been guilty of some great sin, said he, since her shadow had left her, and this sin she must confess to him. In the meantime they had reached the parsonage, and the parson kept pressing his wife to confess the grievous sin that had left her shadowless; while she insisted, and finally took an oath that she had knowingly committed no grievous sin. Then the parson grew angry, and striking the stone table with his fist in his rage, he said to her: "It will be as vain for you to hope to find grace, as it would be for a red rose to grow from this table." And he cast her out, and told her to leave his house at once, and never more set foot over its threshold.

The parson's wife put on the old clothes in which she had come to him, and wandered out into the world to regain the grace she had forfeited.

And the parson strictly forbade his people to take any one in at the parsonage, for he feared his wife might return.

For a long time the parson's wife wandered about, seeking advice as to how she might atone for her grievous sin, and none could help her. But at last she did find a pastor who, when he had listened to all she had to say, and had carefully reflected upon it, thought that perhaps he might be able to help her; but that she would have much to bear, and she would be able to endure it. Yes, she would dare anything in order to gain peace and forgiveness for the grievous sin that weighed upon her. So he took her to church with him, and bade her sit beside the altar. There she must sit the whole night through, he told her. Then he put a book in her hand, and forbade her to give it to any one until he himself came in the morning and asked for it. And she must watch it carefully, for all sorts of people, closely resembling him, would come and demand it of her.

So the pastor went away and she remained in the church by herself. Night fell and she sat alone at the altar with the book. First, a curious fellow came up to her, who said nothing but spat thrice in her direction. Then came seven children, one after another, first five boys, then two girls. These were the unborn children she should have had. They made clear to her what honest, God-fearing men and women they would have become, and how happy they would have been, had she allowed them

to come into the world, and they spat at her, one after the other. Then came a man who greatly resembled the pastor. He demanded the book, and came so close to her that he almost touched her; but she did not give it to him. And then other people came, until the woman grew quite dizzy; but she sat quiet, never moved, and clutched the book tightly, and thus she sat when the real pastor came in the morning and asked her for it. She was still so confused that it was with difficulty that he obtained the book from her. Then he took her by the hand, led her from the church, and said that now she was delivered. But he also told her that she had but this one day to live, and that now she should return to her husband.

The pastor's wife at once set forth: she walked all day long and toward evening, at twilight, she reached her old home. There she asked to be taken in. The people no longer recognized her, but still they refused her request, since they had been strictly forbidden to take in any one, no matter who it might be. But she pleaded so long and so earnestly that they finally allowed her to lie down behind the stove until daybreak; but then she was to make herself scarce as soon as possible.

In the morning, when the pastor got up, he saw that a beautiful red rose had blossomed forth from the stone table he had once struck with his fist. A

great fear seized him, and he knew that his wife must have returned. He went out at once to his people, and asked them whether they had taken in any one overnight. They all said no; but he went about, searching everywhere, and at length came to the stove, and there he saw his wife lying cold and dead. Thereupon a strange feeling came over him, he went in at once, took off his gown, gave it to his people and ordered them to burn it at once. But they thought it would be a wicked shame to burn so good a gown, and burned an old one instead. The following morning they found the pastor in bed; he was quite out of his mind, and died not long afterward.

NOTE

"The Pastor's Wife" (Grundtvig, III, No. 6, p. 19), from Thy, sounds like an excerpt from some old book of moral tales. Her penance in the church at night is a curious pendant to the legend of Wolfdietrich, who as an aged man rids himself of all his sins in a cloister in the course of a single night; he sits alone at the altar during the passing of the nocturnal hours, and the spirits of all those whom he has slain surround and assail him. The rose blooming from the dead wood or stone is also a widely known symbol of divine forgiveness, used with especial effect in the Tannhäuser legend.

XXI

THE ALE OF THE TROLLS

IN a homestead near Roskilde there once lived a man named Peter Anderson, and in a hillock on his farm dwelt a number of trolls. They were celebrating a wedding one day, and late at night they ran out of ale. Then a troll went to the peasant, who had brewed ale not long since, knocked at his door and said: "Will you help me out, and loan me a cask of ale, Peter Anderson? I will bring it back again when we have brewed."

"Who are you and where do you live?" asked the peasant.

"I am the man from the hillock over yonder," said the troll.

"Yes, go down into the cellar and help yourself to a cask," said the peasant. The troll got the ale and went home with it.

A few nights later the troll came to the house again and knocked. The peasant woke up and asked: "Who is knocking?"

"It is I," said the troll, "I am bringing back the ale I borrowed from you. I've put it in the cellar and am going to reward you for being so obliging.

If you take care not to look in the cask, you can draw from it as long as you wish, and it will never grow empty."

For a long time all went well; they drew and drew and there was always ale in the cask, and no one ever looked into it. But one day they had a new maid, and she could not understand how it could be that there was never any ale brewed; and yet there was always ale on hand. So she determined to look into the cask, to see whether it would not soon be empty. But what was her fright when she saw that the cask was full of toads. And from that moment on there was no more ale in it.

NOTE

"The Ale of the Trolls" (Grundtvig, No. 107, p. 147), from the vicinity of Roskilde, proves how closely the magic power of the troll-folk was connected with the daily life of the Danish peasant.

XXII

THE MILL AT THE BOTTOM OF THE SEA

ONCE upon a time there were two brothers, who lived near one another; one was named Lars and he was rich; while the other was poor and was called Jack. The rich brother was very miserly as well as rich, as is quite often the case. So it once chanced, not long before Christmas, that the poor brother came to the rich brother, and asked whether he would not give him a few eatables as a contribution to his Christmas supper, seeing that he had so little at home and so many children.

"There you are again with another tale of woe," said Lars. "I suppose I cannot get rid of you, so there's a flitch of bacon for you, once and for all, and you can go to the devil with it!"

"Thanks ever so much," said Jack, "and that's what I'll do," for he was unsuspicious and trustful. So he loaded the bacon on his back and went. But instead of going home, he turned in the opposite direction, in order to inquire where he might find the devil.

He went a long way, and at last found an old man who was standing on a hill and digging.

"And whither are you bound?" asked the man, "that you come this way this time of the day?" For it was already evening.

"Well," said Jack, "my brother told me I should go to the devil with this flitch of bacon; but I do not know where he is, and I see that I shall have my troubles finding him."

"Not at all," said the man, "it is easy enough to find the way to him. Just be kind enough to step down into the hole I have been digging here, it is deeper than you think, and keep on going till you meet something."

So the poor man wrapped up his bacon carefully, hugged it closely to him, and made himself as small as ever he could, for he thought he would be cramped in the hole; but there was so much room that a number of others could have gone along with him. At last he came to a frightful fire, burning in the middle of the ground, and so hot it could have roasted an ox. There he spied so many little devils that they were a sight to see. They ran around about the fire, and ran over to him, and wanted to know what he had in his bag.

"I have a flitch of bacon here," said he, "my brother gave it to me, and said that I should go to the devil with it; but now I do not know whether you want to buy it or not, for this is evidently where the devil lives."

Nothing could be better, said they, for bacon was just the kind of meat that they could use, for devils and swine had been living together since the days of the Christ. And they offered him a sort of coffee-mill in exchange.

"But what am I to do with that?" he asked, "I have no coffee-beans to grind in it."

"If you have none, all you need to do is to think of grinding some," said they, "and then you will have them at once; but you do not have to grind coffee-beans; a mill such as this will grind out anything you want, and will keep on grinding as long as you wish, and when you think that you have enough, and want to make it stop, you need only say three words to it—and the devil whispered something into his ear—"and then it will stop at once."

"Thank you kindly, and I'll bear them well in mind," said he, and left the devil, taking his mill with him.

When he came home to his wife it was late at night, and she was angry and began nagging him: "And where have you been, you silly Jack? Here it is past midnight, and we should have had a few bits of something to eat this blessed Christmas Eve! You know that there's not a thing in the house, and I have been expecting you for an eternity, in constant fear that something might have happened to you."

"Now, dearest wife, do stop your talk," said he, "I must tell you that I really went to the devil, and there I got the mill that I have set on the table; that's a mill we can use, and we will give it a trial at once."

"That's all very well," said she, "but what we need most is missing, for we have no coffee-beans in the house."

"Oh, as to the beans, the mill furnishes those itself; that was part of the bargain!" said he.

"That is another matter. If you could get the mill to do that, it would be splendid, for we could have a cup of coffee for Christmas. But what we really need more is a bit of bread and some candles, otherwise we will have to sit in the dark on Christmas night."

But the mill could grind out all these things, so he said: "Grind candles!" And at once the candles were ground out. They lit them, and then he had the mill grind bread, black bread first of all. The mill worked fast, one loaf after another tumbled out so quickly that in a short time he was able to say: "Now we have all the bread we need for a good while." Then the mill ground out fine white bread for their Christmas dinner, and soon they had more bread than they needed.

"Is there anything else you need?" said he.

"AND THEY ALSO GROUND OUT SILVER SPOONS, AND GOBLETS, AND KNIVES AND FORKS, ALL OF THE PUREST SILVER."

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"Tell me at once, since the mill is well under way now."

To tell the truth there was a good deal they needed, for as we have said Jack was as poor as poverty. So they ground out kitchen ware and furniture, pots and pans, and pitchers and jugs, as well as finer things of gold and silver. And they also ground out silver spoons, and goblets, and knives and forks, all of the purest silver.

"I think we will stop now," said his wife, "we already have so much that we can give a feast."

"Stop we shall," said he, and after the mill had once more thoroughly done its duty, he uttered the words agreed upon and it stopped.

Then Jack nearly walked his legs off going around in the village inviting all to be good enough to come and visit his wife and himself on the day after Christmas. He invited the whole parish and all were surprised, for they knew he had scarcely enough salt for his soup, and thought he had gone out of his mind. He also went to his brother, thanked him for the help he had given him, and asked him to come to the feast he was giving the day after Christmas, together with his wife. The rich brother and his wife made a good pair, for she was quite as miserly as he was; but nevertheless she did not think it worth while going. There were

others who thought the same, and they stayed home; but there were also many who came, and they stood open-mouthed when they saw the splendor and the abundance everywhere visible.

In the course of the afternoon, when Lars stepped out of the door, to see what sort of weather might be expected, he noticed a number of people going in and out of his brother's house. He kept turning it over in his thick head, and at last went in and told his wife what he had seen. She could not understand Jack's having so many guests, and they decided to step over for a moment, for Lars' wife was very inquisitive.

When they went in they opened their eyes wide, too, for there was not a house in the village so richly appointed. They were immediately asked to sit down to dinner, but when they were through Lars spoke to his brother in the hall, and asked him what it all meant: "You poor, needy devil, have you stolen it or borrowed it? Tell me where you obtained it all?"

"Gladly," said Jack. "Do you remember, when you gave me the bacon for Christmas, that you told me to go to the devil with it? I took you at your word, and they took the bacon and gave me in exchange a mill that grinds out everything that one wishes and furnishes everything that one may need."

"That's a pretty untruth you are telling me," said his brother, "but let me have a look at your mill, and I will buy it from you."

So Jack showed it to him: "How much do you want for it?"

"Well, a mill like this is not cheap, as you may well imagine," said Jack. "It will cost you three hundred dollars. I really had no intention of selling it; but since you are my brother, you shall have it."

That was a mort of money, and would he not sell it cheaper? No, that was his last word, he would not sell it for a shilling less; and besides he wanted to keep it for another six months, and keep it grinding out whatever he needed. And with that the rich man had to be content, for though he bitterly regretted having to pay so much money; yet he was still less inclined to look on quietly and see his brother keep the mill, for he was afraid that Jack might become as rich as he was.

It was not until fall that the mill was handed over to Lars, and he could take it home. Then he decided that his wife might just as well go out to work in the field with him from morning till night during the fall, instead of staying home, as usual, to cook the meals. That would be a great saving, for all that he need do would be to go home at noon, set the mill going,

and the mill would grind out their dinner in no time. They agreed to have mush and herring the first day, since it was a long time since they had eaten any fresh herring. A little before noon the man ran home. He gave the mill a turn and said: "Mill, grind mush and herring for me!" The mill at once began to creak and quickly ground out mush and herring together. He put one keg after another under it, and in a short time all that he had were filled. Then he had the mill fill the tubs, "for we can use it for the pigs," thought he, and the mill kept on grinding. At last all his pails were full as well, and now he thought he had enough for the time being, and wanted to stop the mill. But the mill would not stop, for his brother had not taught him the words that would stop it. "I can hold the mill down," thought he, "it is not very large"; but by the time he had tired himself out, he was standing up to his waist in mush and herring.

His wife out in the field thought it strange that it took him so long to call her to dinner, and she went down the hill to see whether he were not standing outside the house beckoning to her. But he came running out of the yard, calling his hands to hurry back home and help him hold down the mill. By the time they got there, the mill had filled the whole farm-house. A door burst and it all rolled out into the garden like a veritable flood, and made

an enormous porridge outside. Then Lars began to feel somewhat uncomfortable, and it occurred to him that it might be best to send for his brother. His brother came, but he was willing to stop the mill only on condition that it be returned to him. While they stood and bargained, the mill kept on grinding, until the whole yard was well-nigh full. Now Lars was forced to save his property and gave up the mill. So the mill was stopped, and his brother took it away with him. And then they had to work themselves weary cleaning up the yard and the house. Lars and his hands were kept busy all fall clearing out all the herring and mush, and it was not pleasant work; for it soon began to smell most evilly. But the worst of it was that the whole fall was gone, and Lars could not get his crops into the barn, which meant a great loss for him. And when the winter came, his cattle starved and he lost them, one after another, and in short, the end of it all was that from a rich man he grew to be a poor one.

But the other brother increased his possessions and became a well-to-do man. Then he no longer cared to remain in his little house; and he ground out a really splendid dwelling for himself on a hill that overlooked the sea, and it had a roof of pure gold. There he lived, and all those who sailed past at sea set their course by his roof, so brightly did

it shine; and all who passed near shore visited him in order to see his house.

One day a Norwegian ship captain, who sailed the seas with cargoes of salt, visited him and asked him how he had become so wealthy. Well, he was not so wealthy if it came to that; but he had a mill that could grind out anything he wanted. A mill like that would be worth while having, said the skipper, and could it grind salt?

"Of course it can," said Jack, and set it in motion, and the skipper could see that it ground out fine salt, or coarse salt as one might prefer. So he took a great fancy to the mill, and insisted on buying it.

"It would be tremendously useful to me and would save me long sea voyages, going and coming, for it is a great ways to the salt cliffs."

Well, he could have it if he payed a thousand dollars for it, and so the bargain was closed without much discussion. The skipper took the mill with him; but what had happened to the rich man also happened to him, for he had not even thought of having Jack tell him how to stop the mill when he had once started it.

When he got out to sea, he decided to set the mill to work, and first it ground out fine salt, and then coarse salt, when he had enough of the fine. But when he had kept it grinding until he had no more

than a single plank above water, he wanted to stop it. He seized it with both hands, and tried to check it, but in vain, for the mill acted as though it did not understand him, and kept on grinding just as hard as before.

Then he quickly called together his whole ship's company; yet though they put forth all their strength, they could not stop the mill. Then they began to throw out the salt, but they could not throw it out as fast as the mill ground it out, and the end of it all was that the ship became top-heavy and sank. The mill sank along with it, and had still not been stopped, so that it is running yet, and the proof of it is: no matter how much fresh water runs into the sea, the sea stays as salt as ever it was.

NOTE

Of genuine Northern origin and current as far as Iceland, is the story of "The Mill at the Bottom of the Sea" (Kristensen, V, No. 27, p. 147) from Jutland. The strange mill was known to the old Norsemen. In the Edda it is in the possession of King Frodi, and the tale is told of how a sea-king robbed him of it, and had it grind salt until his ship sank with all on board.

XXIII

THE PIG

ONCE upon a time there was a woman who had three daughters, and one day they had to swingle flax. While they were in the garden their mother came out to see to the work. At that moment a pig ran into the garden, and started eating up the cabbage. The woman told her oldest daughter to go and drive him off, and the daughter ran toward the pig with the flax-swingle in her hand. When she was close to him the pig cried: "Scratch me, scratch me!"

"Yes, I'll scratch you till you feel it!" said the girl, and chased the pig, which ran hurriedly into the woods; but there fell so thick a fog that the girl lost her way, and then the pig disappeared behind a thicket, and reappeared in the shape of a man. He told the girl to come with him. She would have an easy time of it, and all the work she would have to do would be to prepare their meals; otherwise she might do as she chose. The girl could not find her way home again, as she was completely lost, and so she followed the pig.

The following day the mother was busy baking with her two daughters when they again saw the pig out in the garden, and the mother told her second daughter to hurry and drive him out. She ran out with the poker in her hand, and the pig ran too, and she after it into the woods, and suddenly there fell such a heavy fog that she lost her way. All at once the pig was gone, and instead a man stood before her, and said to her, as he had to her sister, that she had best go home with him; she should not have to work, and he would show her all his silver and gold; only there was one room she must not enter.

On the third day the mother was combing flax with her youngest daughter, when they again saw the pig in the garden. The daughter wanted to go out and drive him off, but her mother would not allow her to, because she feared that like her two sisters, she would not return.

"No," said the daughter, "I will take care of myself," and she ran after the pig.

"Scratch me, scratch me!" cried the pig.

"Yes, indeed, I'll scratch you!" she cried, and struck at him.

"Yes, you know how to scratch me," said the pig, and ran off into the woods, and she after him. But again there fell so heavy a fog that she could not find her way back, and the pig turned into a man, and told her to follow him to his home and be his

wife. All she would have to do would be to prepare the meals for them, and there were only two rooms into which she must not enter—these were just the two rooms in which he kept her two sisters; but that, of course, she could not know. She was no longer able to find her way home, so she had to follow him. She did have an easy time of it with him, and he really had an alarming quantity of gold and silver. Yet in spite of that she was not happy, for she knew her mother was longing for her; yet how she might manage to get home again she could not imagine.

The man was away all day long, and she was home alone; so one day she looked through the keyholes of the rooms she was forbidden to enter, and there she saw her sisters inside. She called to them, and they discussed through the keyholes how they might manage to get together, and find the way back home. The one sister knew that the key of the rooms lay on a mantle-board over the hearth, and the youngest brought it at once, and was now able to go in and out of the rooms as she chose. Then she considered how she might deceive the man, in order that they might get back to their parents, who were no doubt much worried about them, and could not know what had become of them.

When the man came home that night he complained of the severe cold.

"Well, I suppose we can stand it," said she, "but imagine how hard it must be for my poor parents when it is as cold as this; they have only hard pebbles to burn, and they will burn as well to-day as they did yesterday, and to-morrow as they did to-day." Then he said that he had no objection to letting them have a little fuel. He would go out that very evening, and she should fill a sack with coal and tie it on his back, and he would bring it to her parents himself. So she thanked him and was very well satisfied. Then she took a bag, and at the bottom she put silver and gold, then she put in one of her sisters, and over her sister coal, so that he would notice nothing amiss, and she said to her sister: "Now when he is under way with you, he is apt to look into the bag, and then you must say: 'I can see you quite well! I can see you quite well!' Then he will think I am watching him."

The man came and fetched the bag, and the girl told him he must not open it, and that she would keep an eye on him and watch, to be sure that he really brought the bag to her parents. Off he went with the bag, but when he had gone a little way he said:

"The way is long,
A heavy load I drag;
If I but knew
What were in the bag!"

But the sister in the bag at once called out: "I can see you quite well, I can see you quite well!" Then the man was frightened, because he thought his wife could see him and he said:

"A curse upon your eyes so bright,
They cover every vale and height!"

And he went hastily into the house of her parents, flung the bag through the door, and said there was something they could use for heating. The parents at once opened the bag, and were very much pleased; for they now had their oldest daughter again.

The man went home and was tired, so he did not go into the locked rooms as usual. And the next day his wife again said to him that it was so terribly cold she was afraid her parents had burned all the coal he had brought them, and would he not take them another bag that evening. Yes, said he, she need only have it ready for him. So she put gold and silver at the bottom of the bag as she had done before, and on them the other sister, and coal on top. And she told her second sister what she had told the first. The man came and dragged off the sack, and everything happened as before. After he had gone a good way, he said:

"The way is long,
A heavy load I drag;
If I but knew
What were in the bag!"

But the sister in the bag at once called out: "I can see you quite well, I can see you quite well!" The man again thought his wife was watching him and said:

"A curse upon your eyes so bright,
They cover every vale and height!"

And he hurried to her parents and flung the sack rudely in through the door. When he returned home he wanted to look at the rooms; but his wife told him to let it go for that evening, since supper was ready, and for him to come and eat while it was hot. So that evening he did not go into the locked rooms either.

On the following day he was away from home, and could not look after them, and when he did get home his wife once more told him that her parents were sure to freeze to death owing to the cold, and whether they could not have one more bag of coal.

"Yes, yes," said the man, they could have one more bag. "But three times is times enough," and that was the last they should have.

That would answer, said she, if he would make

them a present of one more bag she would never ask anything further of him. "But I do not feel quite well to-day," she added, "and if you find that I happened to forget to tie up the bag, then it will be because I have gone to bed, so please tie it up yourself."

"Yes, yes," said the man. So when he had gone she first took a great armful of straw, tied a large handkerchief around it, and laid it in the bed. Not until then did she put gold and silver in the bag, crawl into it herself, and cover herself up as well as she could with coal. When the man came and saw that the sack had not been tied up, and that the coal shovel still lay beside it, it was clear to him that his wife had gone to bed. So he took up the sack and went away with it. When he had gone a way, he said:

"The way is long,
A heavy load I drag;
If I but knew
What were in the bag!"

But the woman in the bag called out: "I see you quite well, I see you quite well!"

"Oh, dear!" said the man:

"A curse upon your eyes so bright,
They cover every vale and height!"

And he ran hurriedly to her parents with the sack, flung it in through the door, and muttered that there it was, and it was the last they would get.

They thanked him kindly, and were very happy; for now they had all three of their daughters again. He had taken them away and brought them back, and did not even know that he had done so.

When the man returned home he at last made time to look into the locked rooms—and found them empty. He then ran to the bed to look for his wife; he shouted at her and shook her; but all he held in his hand was a bundle of straw. Then he realized that he had been fooled, and flew into such a rage that he burst into pebbles, the very same kind of pebbles that are cutting our feet this minute.

NOTE

The story of "The Pig," from East Jutland (Grundtvig, III, No. 8, p. 24), is told in the same way in Russia.

XXIV

"TO THE DEVIL WITH THE MONEY! I KNOW WHAT I KNOW"

ONCE upon a time there was a man who had three daughters, who were all three married to trolls. One day the man set out to visit them, and his wife gave him some dry bread to eat on the road. When he had walked a while, he felt tired and hungry. So he sat down on the east side of a hill and began to munch his dry bread. Thereupon the hill opened and his oldest daughter looked out.

"But, father dear, why don't you come into the house?"

"Well," said he, "if I had known that you were living here, and had seen any entrance, you may be sure I would have gone in."

Immediately after, her husband the troll came home, and the woman said her father had come to visit them, and that he had best buy some soup-meat.

"We need not go to that trouble," said the troll. And with these words he hammered a nail into the wall, and beat his head against it so that great lumps of flesh fell off. The troll at once gathered

them up, and then they all had a rich, strong soup. Then the troll gave the old man a bag of money, and he started back home. When he was nearly home, it suddenly occurred to him that his cow might have had a calf. So he set down his bag of money on the ground, ran home as quickly as he could, and asked his wife whether the cow had a calf. "How is it you come a-running so, all out of breath?" said his wife. "No, the cow has no calf."

"Well, at any rate you will have to come out with me and help me carry home a bagful of money," said the man.

"Carry home a bagful of money?" said his wife.

"Of course, carry home a bagful of money," said the man. "Is there anything very surprising about that?"

Though his wife did not quite believe him, she gave in, nevertheless, and went along. But when they came to the spot where he had left it, there was not a trace of the bag of money: a thief had stolen it. Then the woman grew angry and began to scold her husband.

"Oh, nonsense," said he, "to the devil with the money! I know what I know."

"What do you know?" asked his wife.

"Well, that's just what I know," said the man.

Not long after the man wanted to visit his second

oldest daughter. His wife once more gave him some dry bread, and when he grew tired and hungry, he sat down on the east side of a hill and began to eat. While he was in the midst of it his second daughter came out of the hill, and invited him in, and he was glad to accept her invitation. Immediately after the troll came home; and since in the meantime it had grown dark, his wife asked him to buy a candle.

"Oh, we will light up at once," said the troll, and thrust his fingers into the fire; then his fingers shone, and yet they were not burned. Here the old man was presented with two bags of money and trudged off home with them. But when he had nearly reached home, he thought of his cow again. So he put down his two bags of money on the ground, ran home and asked his wife whether the cow had a calf.

"What is the matter with you?" said his wife. "Here you come a-running as though the house were afire. You have nothing to excite yourself about, for the cow has no calf."

Then the man insisted that his wife help him carry home the two bags of money. She did not place much faith in his words, but he kept at her so long that finally she gave in and went with him. But when they reached the spot a thief had once more anticipated them, and had taken the money-

bags along. So it is not surprising that his wife was much put out. But the man only said: "If you only knew what I know!"

Then the man set out for the third time, to visit his youngest daughter. When he reached a hill he sat down on the eastern slope, and began to eat the dry bread his wife had given him. Out came his daughter and took her father in, and before long the troll came home. They wanted to have a fish-dinner, and the wife told her husband to go out and buy some fish. But he said they could have fish without taking so much trouble. All he needed was her bread-pan and her ladle. So the troll and his wife sat down in the bread pan and rowed out to sea. When they had rowed awhile, the troll said: "Are my eyes green?"

"No, not yet," answered his wife.

Then they rowed another while and the troll asked once more: "Are not my eyes green yet?"

"Yes, now they are green," said his wife.

Then the troll leaped into the water and fetched up so many fishes with his ladle that the bread-pan was put to it to hold them all. When they got back they ate them with gusto; and the old man was given three bags of money to take home with him. But when he was nearly home, he again remembered the cow. He laid down the bags of money on the ground; but this time he took off his wooden

shoon and put them on top of them, for he thought that would prevent their being stolen.

Then he ran home to ask his wife whether the cow had yet had a calf. But while he was home a thief came once more, and carried off the bags of money; but he left the wooden shoon. When the man brought along his wife to get the bags of money, she was furious and began to scold. But he was perfectly quiet and only said: "To the devil with the money! I know what I know!"

"What do you know?" asked his wife. "I should like to know what you know myself."

"Wait, and in due time you shall," said the man.

One day the woman wanted to make soup, so she said to her husband: "Now go to town and buy a piece of soup-meat."

"That is not necessary," said he, "we need not go to that trouble." And he hammered a nail in the wall, and beat his head against it until the blood ran down in streams—and then he lay ill in bed for a long time after. When he recovered, it happened that they were without light one day, and his wife told him to go and buy a candle.

"No," said he, "that is not necessary at all," and he thrust his hand into the fire. Thereupon he again had to stay in bed for a long time. When he was well once more his wife wanted to have a fish-dinner one day, and told him to go and buy some

fish. But he again wanted to show how artful he was, and told her she need only come with him, and take her bread-pan and ladle along. They both sat down in the bread-pan and rowed out to sea. After they had rowed a while the man said: "Are my eyes green?"

"No," said his wife, "why should they be green?"

And when they had rowed a while longer, the man again asked her: "Are not my eyes green yet?"

"No, why do you talk such nonsense?" said his wife. "Why should your eyes be green?"

Then the man said: "My dear good woman, can you not at least *say* that my eyes are green?"

"Well, have it so," said his wife, "they are green."

No sooner had he heard this than he leaped into the water with the ladle, in order to ladle out the fish. But instead, he stayed down below with them.

NOTE

Unusual stupidity is as dear to the fairy tale as unusual slyness, and "To the Devil with the money! I know what I know!" (Grundtvig, I, No. 196, p. 246), from Vendsyssel, recounts with enjoyment some notably foolish performances.

XXV

THE LOUTISH PEASANT

ONCE upon a time there were two gentlemen who were brothers; one had married and had children, the other was an old bachelor. He lived in Jutland, but his married brother lived in Seeland, between Kalundborg and Holbaek. In the course of time the bachelor found it too burdensome to maintain a household of his own, and look after the serving-men at home and in the fields; so when his brother suggested that he come live with him in his old days, he gladly accepted his offer, sold his estate, and turned all he had into cash, with the exception of a team of horses and a wagon, which he took with him, in order that he might enjoy them in the future. He also had a faithful servant, who had been with him many years, and who was to accompany him. They had themselves ferried across to Kalundborg, and drove on into the country.

All went well as long as they kept to the high road, for the way was easy to find; but when they had to turn aside, the gentleman was not quite sure which direction they should take, although he had visited his brother several times for, after all,

it is not hard to go astray in parts unknown. A neat little farm lay beside a narrow road along which they were driving, and the gentleman said to his servant: "Oh, Peter, run over there, and ask whether we are on the right road, for I am not quite sure!" The servant crossed the road, and when he came to the house there stood a lean old peasant chopping peat.

"How do you do, daddy?" said Peter.

"Hey?" said the peasant.

"How do you do, daddy?" said Peter, more loudly, for he thought the man was hard of hearing. But the latter did not answer.

"Can you tell me if that is the road to the estate?" He had to repeat it once more, and speak louder.

"To the devil with the road! You can drive wherever you want to, it is nothing to me!"

"He's a hard man to do business with," thought Peter to himself, and went back to his master.

"Are we on the right road?"

"I don't know," said Peter, short and to the point.

"Why, what is the matter, Peter?"

"I've never met such a lout in all my days," said Peter, and he told what had happened to him.

"I think we are on the right road, so we'll drive straight ahead." So they drove on, and before

long they reached the brother's house. When they had stepped in the old bachelor said: "That's a fine race of peasants you have in this part of the country."

"Yes, indeed."

"They are a particularly fine sort."

"You praise them a little too highly," said his brother. "Perhaps you are not altogether serious. Whom did you meet?"

"Well, we met a rude old fellow at a neat little homestead down the road."

"Ah, yes, he is the only one of his kind," said his brother, who knew at once who was meant, "he would begrudge a man dying of thirst a single drop of water from his well."

Peter, who was standing there, said: "I can scarcely believe that he is as bad as that."

"He is, for a fact."

"Then I think I'll try, after all, and see whether I cannot make him take me in over night."

"No, that's something that cannot be done," said the Seelander. "I will give you fifty dollars if you can manage it."

The bargain was struck, and the coachman was ordered to go along to see that the conditions were honestly observed. So toward evening they rode off.

"Good-evening, daddy!" said Peter to the peasant, who was still in the yard chopping peat.

"Hey?"

"Will you take us in for the night?"

"No, may the devil take me, I will not!" said the old man suddenly, in a fit of rage.

"Thank you, you are very kind," replied Peter. "Then we will lead in the horses," and without more ado he went toward the stable door. But the peasant followed him and wanted to seize the staple.

"Thanks, thanks, but that is really not necessary, we can open it ourselves," said Peter; and shoved the dumbfounded old man aside. In the stable were two handsome bays. Peter untied them, and they ran out into the yard, where the peasant could catch them again if he had a mind. In the meantime the coachman held their horses, and they stabled them, and fastened them so firmly that the lout would have no easy task unloosening them again. For he was so furious that he did not know what to do. But Peter acted as though nothing had happened, and said: "I feel sure that you will feed our horses well."

"No, may the devil take me if I do!" cried the peasant and wanted to close the stable door.

But Peter shoved him aside and said: "That is

really not necessary; we can fetch the fodder ourselves." And he went up into the hay-loft and found hay so fine that poor people might almost have eaten it. The peasant went in with him, planted himself before the hay and stretched out his arms, as though to keep them away.

"No, thanks, we do not need so much," said Peter, "a small armful will be enough." At the same time he took as much as he needed, and went with it to his horses. But the old man slunk out into the yard, and began chopping peat again.

When Peter came out of the stable, he went to the window, looked in and saw the peasant's wife, a good, neat, nice-looking woman. And as he passed the window he imitated her husband's voice and cried: "Wife, dish up the best in the house for the two strangers!" This she was glad to do, for she was not at all miserly, and she at once prepared supper.

The two strangers walked about outside until the old man went into the house; for they were afraid he might go into the stable and drive out their horses. Then they crept into the house after him, and when his wife began to put the good things to eat on the table before them, her husband grew still more enraged, and sat him down in the corner by the stove. The two servants acted as though they were at home, and did full justice to their supper.

Then Peter said: "Come, eat with us!" But the peasant answered, furiously: "No, may the devil take me if I sit at the table with fellows like yourselves!" And he had his wife give him a bone to chew on, in order to make it seem as though he, too, were eating.

In the meantime the others enjoyed a good meal, and when they had finished Peter said to the peasant's wife: "You can leave everything on the table until to-morrow morning, for our breakfast; and now I think we had best go to bed." The woman obeyed them, and showed them a room in which a good bed had been set up. The coachman laid himself down on it, but Peter said: "I have traveled some distance to-day, and I've grown stiff, so I would rather sleep on the bench." The peasant and his wife now went to bed themselves; but after a while the man complained that he felt very hungry. "Well, why did you not eat with the strangers?" his wife asked him.

"How could I have eaten with those accursed strangers, such a brace of robbers, helping themselves to everything!"

"Well, at least you can get up now, and take whatever you need of the food on the table," said his wife.

So he got up and sneaked over to the table, and began to help himself from the dishes with his fin-

gers. But Peter had taken care to bring his horse-whip in with him, and it lay beside him. He got up and gave the man a sound crack across the fingers.

"Scat, scat!" he said, and acted as though he were driving off a cat. "These people have forgotten to lock out the cat, and it would be a sin and a shame if it stole all the good food."

The man was so frightened he hurried off without a word and crept back into bed. There he lay a while. "I am so hungry."

"Well, what are we to do?" said his wife, "it seems so strange that you did not satisfy your hunger this evening."

"One thing is certain, I will not be able to stand it much longer."

"Then I suppose I will have to get up and make you some pan-cakes?"

This suggestion pleased him mightily, and he accompanied her so that the strangers should not frighten her. When they had three cakes on the glowing ashes, Peter joined them and said: "You are early risers."

"Yes, at our age people cannot sleep until daybreak," the old man answered.

"Well, I am not able to sleep myself, and I am weary from traveling," said Peter, "so we will sit up together and talk. I might have been just as

well placed as you are, for my father had a big homestead; but I had three sisters, and they married three farm-owners, and one of them lived there''—and he made a drawing in the ashes with the butt-end of his whip that ruined one pan-cake —''and the other lived there''—and then the second pan-cake had met with an accident—''and the third one lived over yonder''—and then he tore the third pan-cake apart—''and each one received a homestead. But if my father had only given me as much as there is lying in the ashes now . . .''—and then he stirred up the ashes with the butt of his whip until the pan-cakes were entirely destroyed.

Then the peasant cried: ''When are you confounded fellows really going away?''

''We never say good-by until there's a crow sitting on the roof,'' said Peter and went in, while the rest remained outside. Not long after the peasant's wife came in, and said that now a crow was sitting on the roof.

''Wretched bird!'' cried Peter and ran out. After a time he came back and said: ''Now I have driven it off. I threw a good chunk of wood at it and it fell down.''

''Well, you have probably done no great harm,'' said the peasant's wife.

That he knew nothing was his answer and, as to harm, what harm could have been done?

But she ran out and looked for her husband; because he had decided to play the part of the crow, and had climbed on the roof.

Now he lay on the ground and that was the end of him. The woman wept and complained, but Peter was at hand and helped her lay him out and before he went, said he would be glad to come back and help her in any way he could. Thereupon Peter and the coachman traveled home again, and his master's brother had to give him the fifty dollars.

But that was not all. Peter became a regular visitor at the widow's home after the funeral; and since she was a nice woman he proposed to her and she accepted him, because he had been such a help to her. So he became a prosperous homesteader, and was obliging and friendly to every one, and hospitable to all whose path led them to his door.

NOTE

"The Loutish Peasant" (Kristensen, V, No. 47, p. 360), from Jutland, is a merry tale, to score its titular hero, who has a hard time of it, since avarice and inhospitality are cordially detested in the fairy-tale.

XXVI

THE DEVIL'S KINDNESS

TWO young fellows once were journeying south in order to look for work. One of them soon found a place, but the other was a long time on the road and could secure none. Then, one day, he met a young stranger who asked him where he was going. The young fellow told him his story and the stranger said: "Come along with me. I am looking for work, too, and I think we can find employment."

So they came to a homestead, and were both taken into service as mowers. But the stranger mowed so tremendously that the young fellow had never seen his like. He himself had hard work dragging together enough for the other to thresh. On the very first day they threshed twenty-five tons of barley. When the barley was to be winnowed, all the doors and windows were opened. The stranger stood at one side of the thrashing-floor, and blew so that all the chaff flew out into the court-yard. Then it was gathered up and carried in. They worked in this fashion every day, and it was not long before all the grain had been threshed.

"Now you can go in," said the stranger to the young fellow, "and settle our accounts with the master; but tell him he must pay us for the chaff as well as for the wheat. And if he does not want to pay for it, you may tell him we will turn his barn upside-down."

The young fellow went to the master and received his pay for the wheat; but when he insisted on being paid for the chaff as well, his master quite naturally would not listen to him, and when the young fellow told him that they would stand his barn on its head, he laughed and replied: "You are at liberty to do so if you can."

The young fellow came back to his friend with his report, and the latter at once said: "Come, we will attend to the barn without delay!" So they went up to one side of the barn, and put their shoulders against the wall, and the barn began to shake. When the master saw that he came running, and called out: "Wait, wait, I'll pay you for the chaff!" So the barn remained standing, and they were paid for the chaff.

Then they left the homestead and wandered on for a while. And when they parted, the young fellow, who had received the whole of the pay, said that the stranger should take his share of it. But the stranger said: "No, the few shillings mean nothing to me, you keep the whole amount."

The young fellow thanked him heartily and then wanted to know who it was who had so kindly assisted him.

"Well," said the stranger, "they call me the devil, but I am not so black as I am painted." The young fellow was of the same opinion, but still the whole affair seemed strange to him.

But do you think that the devil had done what he did for no other reason than to do the young fellow a favor? Then you do not really know him. The young fellow visited his comrade, with whom he had been journeying, and when the latter saw all the money, and heard how easily his companion had come by it, he became envious; and his envy tormented him to such a degree that he went and hung himself. And in this way the devil received the payment he had wished to have.

NOTE

"The Devil's Kindness" (Grundtvig, II, No. 11, p. 52) from Tyn, tells of uncanny exhibitions of strength on the part of the devil, and makes him appear far less stupid than is usually the case in fairy tales.

XXVII

HUSBAND AND WIFE

ONCE upon a time there was a man who traveled around the world with a wagon full of eggs and a string of horses. He distributed the eggs in the homes where the women held sway; the horses he intended to distribute wherever the husband was the master in the house. Thus far he had not had to distribute any of his horses; the eggs had sufficed.

But at last he came to a house where, so it seemed to him, the husband was in authority; and he decided to remain there overnight. On the following morning he made up his mind to go on, thanked his hosts for bed and board, and told the man to choose one of two of his horses, a black and a bay.

"Oh, I'll take the bay!" said the husband.

"No, you would be a fool to take him," cried his wife, "the black is the better horse!"

"Oh, well," answered the husband, "if you say so, wifie, then I'll take the black."

Thereupon the stranger took an egg from the wagon, handed it to him and drove off. And all

they could do was to look longingly after the black horse and the bay horse.

NOTE

"Husband and Wife" (Grundtvig, II, No. 121, p. 125) from Vendsyssel, is a delightful bit of humorous philosophy.

XXVIII

THE WOLF

ONCE upon a time there was a man, and a woman, and they had seven sheep, a bob-tailed colt, a dog and a cat. They had a boy of fourteen, who took care of the sheep.

One day the boy went out with his lunch and the seven sheep, and the wolf came along and said: "Those are fine sheep. Do they belong to you?"

"Yes," said the boy.

"Give me your lunch or I will eat up one of the sheep," said the wolf.

"No, I'll not give you my lunch," said the boy. So the wolf ate up a sheep.

The next day, when the boy went out again with his lunch and his six sheep, the wolf came along again, and what had happened the day before happened again. And so it went every day, until the wolf had eaten up all the sheep. Then the boy's master grew angry and told him to herd the bob-tailed colt. One day the boy went out to the pasture, to look after the colt, and met the wolf again, and the wolf said: "Boy, give me your lunch, or I'll eat up the colt." But the boy would not give up his lunch, so the wolf ate up the colt.

And when the boy came home and told his master what had happened, his master told him to go out into the world, and look for the sheep and the colt. So the boy went, although he knew the wolf had eaten them up. After he had gone a while he took his lunch out of his pocket and began to eat. Up came the wolf and said: "Boy, give me your lunch, or else I will eat you up!" But the boy would not give up his lunch, and so the wolf swallowed him.

The folk at home thought the boy was a long time getting back, and they sent the farm-hand out after him. The farm-hand met the wolf, and asked him whether he had seen the boy, seven sheep, and a bob-tailed colt. The wolf answered: "They are lying in my belly, and are rumbling and tumbling, and there is plenty of room there for you." And no sooner had he said so than he ate him up.

It seemed to the folk at home that the farm-hand was a long time getting back, and they sent the maid out to look for him. She, too, met the wolf, and asked him whether he had not seen a farm-hand, seven sheep, a bob-tailed colt and a boy. The wolf answered her and said: "They are lying in my belly, and are rumbling and tumbling, and there is plenty of room there for you, too," and with that he ate her up.

The farmer waited a long time for the maid; but

at last he grew impatient, and went out to look for her himself. When he met the wolf, he asked him whether he had not seen a boy, a farm-hand, a maid, seven sheep and a bob-tailed colt. The wolf answered: "They are lying in my belly, rumbling and tumbling, and there is plenty of room there for you, too." And no more had he said it than he ate the farmer up.

At home his wife waited a long time for her husband; but at last she had no peace of mind, and went out to look for him. So she met the wolf and asked him whether he had seen a boy, seven sheep, a bob-tailed colt, a farm-hand, a maid and a man. "Yes," said the wolf, "they are lying in my belly, rumbling and tumbling, and there is plenty of room there for you, too." And then he ate up the woman.

Now the dog began to feel very lonely at home, and he set out to look for his people. Soon he met the wolf and asked him whether he had not seen a boy, seven sheep, a bob-tailed colt, a farm-hand, a maid, a man and a woman. The wolf said to him: "They are lying in my belly, rumbling and tumbling, and there is plenty of room there for you, too."

And now there was only the cat left at home; and the cat found it very tiresome, and set out to look for the others. She also met the wolf and asked

him whether he had not seen a boy, seven sheep, a bob-tailed colt, a farm-hand, a maid, a man, a woman and a dog. "Yes," said the wolf, "they are lying in my belly, rumbling and tumbling, and there is plenty of room for you there, too." And then the wolf swallowed the cat.

But he had now eaten so much that he had not enough room to hold it all; the cat and the dog began to quarrel, and at last they scratched him open. And once they had done so, they all came tumbling out: the boy with the seven sheep, the bob-tailed colt, the farm-hand, the serving-maid, the man, the woman, the dog and the cat. They were all still very much alive, and they fell upon the wolf together, killed him and went cheerfully and happily back home again.

NOTE

"The Wolf" (Grundtvig, II, No. 121, p. 214), told after two variants from Vendsyssel and East Jutland, is a mock-terrible tale to frighten the children, with a happy ending.

XXIX

THE WALK TO THE MILL

ONCE upon a time there was a woman who had an over-grown son, who was not very bright, and she could not send him anywhere with a message, because he could never remember what he had been told to say. One day she wanted two bushels of buckwheat from the mill, and thinking he would at least be able to get that for her, she said to him: "Can you bring me two bushels of buckwheat from the mill?"

"Yes, indeed," said he.

"But do not forget it," said his mother. No, he would not forget it, he said, for he always answered promptly.

"You should keep on repeating it to yourself as you go along."

So he went along, and kept repeating to himself: "Two bushels, two bushels, two bushels." But after a while he was saying it so loudly that every one could hear him. At length he passed a man who was sowing corn. When he heard what the boy was saying it made him angry, for he had sown seven tons, and it seemed to him as though the lad was predicting that he would only reap two bushels.

"You rascal, I'll teach you!" and with that he gave him several cuffs. "You dare to say that!"

"Well, what should I say, then?"

"You should say: 'God grant a hundred-fold increase'!"

The boy had no objection, and went on his way repeating as he went: "God grant a hundred-fold increase! God grant a hundred-fold increase!" Then he passed a farm, where they were busy rat-hunting. When the people heard him calling they grew furious, and since he wished them a hundred-fold increase, he got another trouncing.

"Hold your tongue, you scoundrel, and do not say that!" they said when they let him go.

"I will gladly hold my tongue," said the boy, and cried pitifully, "but what am I to say?"

"You should say, 'Off with the infernal vermin! Off with the infernal vermin'!"

This he was quite willing to do and went along crying out as they had told him: "Off with the infernal vermin! Off with the infernal vermin!"

Not long after he encountered a funeral procession. When the people heard what the boy was calling out, and what he was saying about the dead man, they grew angry, collared him and leathered him well.

"You must not say anything like that, you vagabond!" they cried and gave him a few more cracks

for good measure. So he asked them, very much depressed, what he should say.

"That's how one carries the dead to the grave!" they told him. He was quite willing to oblige them, and went on his way, calling out: "That's how one carries the dead to the grave! That's how one carries the dead to the grave!"

As he did so he met a man who was walking along with a greyhound he intended to sell. When he heard what the boy was calling out, he grew angry, for he thought he was making fun of him. So he seized him and gave him a good beating.

"What business has a vagabond like yourself calling out such an insult! Do not dare to do so again! Now see how you like it!"

"But what should I say?" asked the boy.

"You must say: 'That's how one leads a dog to market'!" was the answer.

He was quite willing to say this, and went on repeating what he had been taught: "That's how one leads a dog to market! That's how one leads a dog to market!" Then he reached a homestead where they were just lifting the daughter into a wagon. She was dressed as a bride, and they were taking her to church to be married. When the people heard what the boy was calling out, they took for granted that he was insulting the bride, and they seized him and gave him a terrible flogging, and

made it clear to him that he had better not venture to repeat his call.

"Well, what shall I say then?" wailed the boy, who had already had his full share of thrashings.

"You should say, 'Here there's joy in the house'!" said the farm people.

He was willing and went on his way, crying out as well as he could—for it was no more than a pitiful snivel now—"Here there's joy in the house! Here there's joy in the house!"

At length he came to a farm house that was flaming to the sky, and a number of people were busy around it trying to put out the fire. When they heard what the boy was calling out they grew angry.

"You miserable hound! Do you mean to say that there's joy in the house here? When such a terrible misfortune has happened?" And they caught him, for he could not escape from such a crowd, even if he tried, and they gave him the worst beating he had as yet received.

"Yes, but what should I say?" wailed the boy. "You should say: 'May God lay weather and wind'!"

He took their word for it, and went on repeating what they had told him. At length he came to the mill. There stood the miller tugging at the wings, for the mill would not run because there was no

wind, and the miller was angry since he had a great deal of meal to grind. So he turned on the boy when he heard him crying out.

"Is it necessary for a scamp like yourself to come along with such a wish?" And he gave him a few more cuffs.

By this time the boy had been so thoroughly beaten, and was so frightened that he at once began to cry, and he cried so hard that he clean forgot what he had last said, and as for what he was to get, he had forgotten that long ago. The miller could get nothing out of him, though he cross-questioned him carefully. At last it occurred to him to ask: "Who told you to call out, 'May God lay weather and wind'?" That he remembered; it was the people around the house in flames. "They beat me and said I should not call out what I was calling."

"And what were you not to call out?"

Now he remembered that, too: "I was not to call out: 'Here there's joy in the house'!"

"Who told you to call that out?"

He remembered that as well. It was the people in the farm-yard who were lifting a woman into a wagon. "They beat me and told me I must not call out what I was calling."

"What had you been calling out?" inquired the miller.

"I kept repeating: 'That's how one leads a dog to market'!"

"And who taught you that?"

"A fellow who was leading a dog," said the boy. "He beat me and told me I should not call out what I was calling."

"What had you been calling?"

"I kept on saying: 'That's how one brings the dead to the grave'!" said the boy; for his answers now came as smooth as silk, seeing the miller had known at which end to begin.

"And who told you to call that out?"

"It was the people from a house by the road. They were just carrying out a dead man, and they beat me and forbade my calling out what I was calling."

"Well, what had you been calling?"

"I had just been calling out: 'Off with the infernal vermin'!"

"And who told you to say that?"

"It was the people in a farm-yard who were killing rats," said the boy. "They beat me, and told me I should not call out what I was calling."

"And what were you saying?"

"Wait a minute. Now I remember. I was going along repeating: 'May God give a hundred-fold increase!' and that made them angry."

"But tell me from whom you heard that?"

"There was a man who told me to say that. He was walking in a field beside the road, sowing, and when I came by he grew angry and beat me, and told me not to say what I was saying."

"But what were you saying?" asked the miller.

"I was saying: 'Two bushels of buckwheat! two bushels of buckwheat!' Wait a minute, I was told to get two bushels of buckwheat!"

And then the boy got his two bushels of buckwheat, and that's the end of the story.

NOTE

"The Walk to the Mill" (Kristensen, VII, No. 23, p. 177) comes from Jutland. The stupid boy who does what he is told to do literally and thus gets himself into the most amusing complications, is no new figure. Yet the manner in which, in this tale, he slowly and painfully feels his way back to his forgotten commission along the thread of memory, gains realistic charm by reason of its keen regard for the laws of thought.

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